

THE ⁶
LIFE
AND
DEATH
OF

M^{rs}. MARY FRITH.

Commonly Called
MAL CUTPURSE
Exactly *Collected* and
now Published for the
Delight and Recreation
of all Merry disposed
Persons.

LONDON,

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Giltspur Street without Newgate, 1661.



S. E. a.

TO THE
READER.



EE here an account
of this Sybil
Tiburnia, the O-
racle of Felony;
whose deep diving secrets
are offered to the World en-
tire, without the envy of
that vain price, and more
and fullness, which lost
A the

To the Reader.

*the Roman Emperour the
happy knowledge of those
fam'd Divinations.*

*For he that looks not up-
on Mall Cutpurse with
the same admiration, and
thinks not her Nymphship
as venerable as any of that
mysterious sisterhood, is not
fit to carry Guts to a Bear,
nor officiate in the rites of
those Games consecrated
to this Bona Roba, and
goodly Matron.*

*Such people shall yet give
us liberty to take her for a
Prodigy of those Times she
lived*

To the Reader.

lived in, and to be altogether as presagious in her Habit and Manners, as they were in their ambiguous and doubtfull sentences.

We are not always bound to look upward in the Air, as Hoggs doe against windy weather for prognosticks and revelations of Future Occurrences and Events : Our angry Fates doe sometimes dispence and afford us more familiar and near Hints and Omens of their displeasure (like pitylesse Judges that Laugh before
A 2 they

To the Reader.

they give sentence) in the strange yet ridiculous corruptions and indispositions of humours, which they perspicuously manifested in this *Epicoene Wonder*.

One might as easily have guessed, there were some *Caprichios* in the State, (w^{ch}. appeared afterwards in the *Jealousies*, *Whimsies*, and odd conceits of the whole Masse of the Multitude) by this persons, and other her Cotemporaries, Odd and Fanatick and unheard of Tenour and Manner of life;

To the Reader.

Life; as the people of Jerusalem might have imagined the Destruction of their City, by the severall Arrands and wofull Proclamations thereof, from the Mouths of those Mad Men that ran up and down roaring forth that Approaching Calamity.

This is it which indeed makes her remarkable (and may we never see her Successour or such a Mad Cassandra) beyond all other considerations, which yet are not in themselves regard-

To the Reader

lesse ; nothing appertaining
to her , being to be matcht
throughout the whole Course
of History or Romance ; so
unlike her selfe, and of so
difficult a mixture, that it is
no wonder she was like no
body, nor could not be Sor-
ted by any Comparison, or
Suited with any Antick
Companion.

She was the Living Dis-
cription and Portaiture of a
Schism and Separation, her
Doublet and Petticoate
understanding one another, no
better then Presbytery and
Indepen-

To the Reader.

Independency; and it was
wondred by some, that in
that imitation of the latter,
and in honour of the Rump
she wore not the Breeches;
but it seems she was Loath
to innovate in her Old
Years.

So much may suffice for
her person; there is some-
thing due to be said of her
Practise, and to this part I
must invite none but Mer-
curiallists and the Procura-
resses of the Colledge of
Venus, who have long desi-
red and expected the Works

To the Reader.

and Memorials of this Vi-
rago, as deserving a place
in the Rationale and Ac-
count of Time, as well as
Oliver, but farre beyond
Prince Crispine and his
Lady, and the rest of that
Leud Rout, and band of
Knight Errantry.

Know ye therefore, O all
ye Pick-pockets, Lifters,
Heavers, Rumpads, Bawds,
&c. that as far as with pre-
servation of Honesty & Cre-
dit, we might (not to be en-
dangered by your Converse
out of design of more perfect
intel-

To the Reader.

intelligence) we have prosecuted the discovery of all those Arts and Artifices, for which your Governesse was Famous, and your Government under her Discipline no lesse repntable for it's due regulation. Read therefore if you can spare time from your businesse, the sad decayes of your Trade, in the losse of this Monopolizing Improver thereof, and begin hereafter to Thieve with Discretion and Judgement, that your Incomes be weighed and ballanced with the

A 5 issues,

To the Reader.

issues ; and remember that a composition is better, then the whole principal upon the score of Iotring.

There is a word due also to the Venerable Matrons, that broak in Petticoats; be not you so impudently immodest and shameless in your Profession, in venturing upon all chastities and innocence, to the debauch of unwary and unarmed pudicity ; For be assured Mal was no such open and common offender in this kind, but was very heedfull where she lay-
ed

To the Reader.

ed her Baits and Temptations ; though her Bribes were High, and those that employed her very Potent, who yet would descend to the lures of poor and naked Beauty: Such she most generously scorned to betray, if they had magnanimity to resist. The Town abounds with you, and therefore this caution from so great an Example, to which you owe respect and observance, may be very necessarily and civilly Welcome.

Her

To the Reader.

Her other more indifferent Pranks and Feats will be good diversion to the honest and ingenious, and to him they are commended, desiring him to Excuse the Abruptnesse and Discontinuance of the Matter, and the severall independencie thereof; for that it was impossible to make one piece of so Various a Subject, as she was both to her self and others, being forced to take her as we found her though at disadvantage; which we pray you to consider and accept

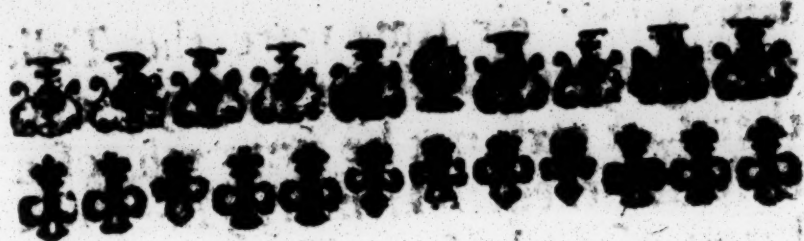
To the Reader.

*cept of this Endeavour as
it is.*

V A L E.

To the Reader
Copy of this Edition
is in.

V. A. E.



The *Life* and *Death* of
 Mrs. MARY FRITH,

ALIAS

MAL CUTPURSE.

TO write this Womans
 History (a Task for
 the Clerk of Newgate,
 if he had no worse
 thing to do) many
 strong and sufficient
 reasons and impulses there are, and
 those partly from the strangeness and
 and newness of the subject, and her
 unparallel'd practices and courses,
 and manner of Life and Livelihood
 B (which

2 The Life and Death

which in their time were the Talk and Discourse of the Town, and therefore may not be unworthy of a reducing them to Memory) and partly out of a pleasant officiousnesse to the publique good, which hath been advantaged (according to information) by such kind of Essayes.

Equally distant it is from the purport and intent of this piece, to favour her Ashes, or to rake her in her Grave; but as she lived in a kind of mean betwixt open, profest dishonesty, and fair and civil deportment, being an *Hermaphrodite* in Manners as well as in Habits, with the same indifferency shall she be used here, by avoiding all Partiality.

She was indeed a perfect *Ambo-lytre*, being Mistressse of that thriving Art: no doubt *Mercury* was Lord of the Ascendant at her Birth, and with his influences did so endow her, that from her very Cradle she gave signes of a very towardly and
preg-

of Mal Cutpurse. 3

pregnant Wench, manifested by several petty Stratagems and designs as oft as occasion and opportunity presented, at her Neighbours as well as at Home.

She was Born *Anno Domini, 1589.* in *Barbican*, at the upper end of *Aldersgate street* (a very ancient street, and probably of as ancient a House, and from thence she may challenge *Gentility*;) This place was formerly a Defence or Bulwark of the City: such Rampiers and Fortifications in our Ancestors days being called *Barbicans*. It is since a Magazine, but of *Pawns* altogether, being a *Brokery*, which made her extraction so well fute with her condition of life afterward. *Plants* and *Trees* do relish in their fruit, of the Ground and Earth they grow in, as welce in *Wines* and *Tobacco*: and our *Mal* had a very great smack and inclure (which lasted throughout the whole Course of her Life) of

B 2

that

4 *The Life and Death*

that most laudable quality and profession exercised in the place of her Nativity; though to give her her due, she was not altogether so unconscionable and cruel as those Vulturs, Harpies and Wolfes, which follow that Trade; and it is wonder they are allowed to have any other signes, and that in order thereunto it is not publicly decreed. But some few honest men, and rare they are, keep off that brand from the other. But this hath another place herein, where it will be properly resumed.

I do not find, that any remarkable thing happned at her Nativity: such as the flattering southsayers pretend in Ecclesies, and other the like motions above, or Tides, and Whales, and great Fires, adjusted and timed to the genitures of great States-men: though for a she politick, she be not much inferiour to Pope *Jean*; for she was in her time the great Cabal
and

of Mal Cutpurse. 5

and Oracle of the mystery of diving into Pockets, and was very well read and skilled, in the Affairs of the Placket too among the great Ones. There being no such notable Accidents falling out then as aforesaid, I cannot ascertain the Week nor Moneth of her Nativity.

She was born of Honest Parentage, her Father being by his Trade a *Schoemaker*, living in good esteem and repute in the world, and in love and friendly familiarity with his Neighbours, a fair and square conditioned Man, that loved a good Fellow next to Himself, which made his Issue be so sociable: we do not here dispute the Company; for she kept of all sorts.

Both of her Parents were very tender of this Daughter, but especially the Mother, according to the tenderness of that Sex, which is naturally more indulgent then the Male; most affectionate she was to

6 *The Life and Death*

her in her Infancy, most careful of her in her Youth, manifested especially in her Education, which was the stricter and diligentlier attended, by reason of her boysterous and masculine spirit, which then shewed it self, and soon after became predominant above all breeding and instruction.

A very *Tomrig* or *Rumpscuttle* she was, and delighted and sported only in Boys play and pastime, not minding or companying with the Girls : many a bang and blow this Hoyting procured her, but she was not so to be tamed or taken off from her rude inclinations ; she could not endure that sedentary life of sewing or stitching, a Sampler was as grievous as a Winding-sheet, her Needle, Bodkin and Thimble, she could not think on quietly, wishing them changed into Sword and Dagger for a bout at Cudgels. For any such Exercise, who but she ! where she would

of Mal-Cutpurse. 7

would not fail, tide what would, if she heard of any such thing, to be a busie Spectator: so that she was very well known, by most of the rougher sort of people thereabouts, when she was yet very young and little.

Her Head-gear and Handkerchief (or what the fashion of those times were for Girls to be dress in,) was alike tedious to her, wearing them as handsomely as a Dog would a Doubler, and so cleanly, that the driven Pot-hooks would have blush'd at the comparison, and alwayes standing the Bear-garden way, or some other Rabble-rout Assembly.

This perplexed her Friends, who had only this Proverb favourable to their Hope, *That an unhappy Girl may make a good Woman*; but they lived not to the length of that expectation, dying in her minority, and leaving her to the swing and sway of her own unruly temper and disposition.

8 *The Life and Death*

She would fight with boyes, and courageously beat them; run, jump, leap or hop with any of them, or any other play whatsoever: in this she delighted, this was all she cared for, and had she not very young, being of a pregnant docible wit, been taught to read perfectly, she might well through her over addition to this loose and licentious sporting have forgot and blotted out any easie impression. But this Learning stood her much in stead afterwards.

She had an Uncle, brother to her Father who was a Minister, and of him she stood in some awe, but not so powerful, as to restraine her in these courses; so that seeing he could not effectually remedy that inveterating evil in her manners, he resigned her to Time, which bringing with it discretion and judgement would certainly at last reclaim her, and bring her to right sense and reason.

This

of Mal Cutpurse. 9

This Uncle the Parson, had a whimsy too (for I am not informed that it was out of any settled serious persuasion, or non-conformity to the Church or it's Customs) which few of the Priests have ever been troubled with; that is, he refused to take Tyth of his Parishioners, but received his maintenance from them under the notion of Contribution; and yet a Jolly Fat fellow he was, and would take off his Cup merrily: but it seems it ran in a blood, each of the Family had his particular Freak, and so had our *Mary*. But in her Trade afterward, she would not be contented with the Tyth, but commonly a full half, or such large composition; for to give the *Devill* his due, was one of her chief Maxims improved beyond the bare letter of a Proverb.

I have thus traced her from her Originals, to shew in what proportions she differed from, and approach-

10 *The Life and Death*

ed to them: and that neither the derivations of the same blood, the assimilation and resemblance of parts, can conform the mind and the faculties thereof, or induce it with the like qualities: but that there is a prevalent power of our Stars which over-rules all, and resists and subdues the additionall and auxiliary strength, and reserves of Education: and this I have said to be Mercury in conjunction with, or rather in the house of Venus at her Nativity.

This Planet Mercury you must know (if you have not well studied *Lilly*) is of a Thievish, Cheating, Deceitful Influence, which is not so powerful in Citizens Shops, Warehouses, Bargains and Sales, Merchandizing and bartering; nevertheless some little finger it hath as with a ray to point at them: so that seldom but some Couzenage or lying at the least, intervenes in those affairs.

of Mal Cutpurse. 11

fairs. In great Fairs and Markets this Planet Operates exceedingly, but it violently rages in great throngs and concourses of people at any great shew, Pomp or Solemnity, as Coronations, my Lord Mayors day and the like; where it doth so whet and set such an edge on the knives and cutting instruments, so quicken and expedite their fingers, and lastly, so vigorously incite and stir up the minds of those whose genitures have relation thereunto, and with such conveyance too, that it were impossible to be done without the connivance of this Star, under the position whereof Turnmill street is directly sited.

For the other of *Venus*, most Men and Women know without reaching what are her properties. She hath Dominion over all *Whores*, *Bawds*, *Pimps*, &c. and joyned with *Mercury* over all *Trapanners* and *Hectors*, She hath indeed a more general influence

12 *The Life and Death*

fluence then all the other Six put together ; for no place nor person is exempted from it , invading alike both sacred and prophane ; Nunneries and Monasteries , as well as the common places of Prostitution ; Cheapside and Cornhill , as well as Bloomsbury or Covent-Garden.

Under these benevolent and kind Stars, she grew up to some Maturity of years, seasoned all along with such rudiments as these, to be put in ure as soon as occasion should present ; She was now a lusty and sturdy Wench, and fit to put out to service, having not a competency of her own left her by Friends to maintain her of her self ; but this went against the Grain, and the Hair as we use to say : She was too great a Libertine, and lived too much in common to be enclosed in the limits of a private Domestic Life.

A Quarter staffe was fitter to her hand then a Distaffe, *stave and taylor* instead

of Mal Cutpurse. 13

instead of spinning and reeling; she would go to the Ale-house when she had made shift for some little stock, and spend her penny, and come into any ones company, and club another till she had any left, and then she was fit for any Enterprize.

She could not endure the Bake-house, nor that Mag-pye Chat of the Wenches; she was not for mincing obscenity, but would talk freely whatever came uppermost; a spice she had even then, of prophane dissolute language, which in her old dayes amounted to down-right Swearing, which was in her not so malicious as customary.

Washing, Wringing, and Starching were as welcome as fasting dayes unto her; or in short, any Household work; but above all she had a natural abhorrence to the tending of Children, to whom she ever had an aversness in her mind, equall to the sterility and barrenness in her womb,
never

34 *The Life and Death*

never being made a Mother to our best information.

At this Age we spake of before, she was not much taxed with any Loosenesse or Debauchery in that kind; whether the virility and manliness of her face and aspect took of any mans desires that way (which may be very rational and probable) or that besides her uncomplyable and rougher temper of body and mind also, which in the female Sex is usually perswasive and winning, not daring or peremptory (though her Disposition can hardly find a suitable term for an indifferent expression of the manage of her life) she her self also from the more importunate and prevailing sway of her inclinations, which were masculine and robust, could not intend those venereal impurities, and pleasures: as stronger meats are more palatable and nutritive to strong bodies then *Quelque choses* and things

Of Mal Cutpurse. 15

things of variety, which may perchance move an appetite, provoke a longing; but are easily restrained from by any considerate good Fellow, that knows what is the lastingst Friend to good Drink and good Company; her Motto.

She could not but know moreover (for I suppose her of a very competent discretion and sagacity of mind as well as maturity and suitable growth at those years) that such Prostitutions were the most unsatisfactory, that like an accidental scuffle or broyl might end in danger, but never in Love, to which she was no way so happily formed; nor was so much a woman as vainly to expect it.

Several Romances there are of many Knights who carried their Ladies away in disguise from their Parents and Native Countries, most commonly in the habites of a Page or some such Man-servant: Certainly

16 *The Life and Death*

Certainly it must be a stupified and far advanced affection which can admire, or fancy, or but admit the view of so unnatural a shape, the reverse of *Sexes* in the most famed Beauties, and to whose excellencies and lustre the world were devoted. How unsightly and dreadful is the hinder region of the air in the sable breeches of a dropping cloud? what an uncomely mantle is that heap of waters which covers the ground, and deluges and invades the dry land? That which so much offends us in the boysterousness of the Elements, cannot but be disgusting to mankind in the immodesty of either *Sexes* attire and dresse.

Hercules, Nero and Sardanapalus, how are they laught at and exploded; for their effeminacy and degenerated dissoluteness in this extravagant debauchery; The first is portrayed with a Distaff in his hand, the other recorded to be married as a wife

of Mal Cutpurse. 47

wife and all the Conjugal and Matrimonial Rites performed at the solemnity of the Marriage; the other lacks the luxury of a Pen as loose as his female riots to describe them. These were all Monsters or Monster Killers, and have no parallels either in old or modern Histories, till such time as our *Mal Cutpurse* approached this Example; but her heroick impudence hath quite undone every *Romance* ——— For never was any woman so like her in her cloaths,

Generally we are so much acquainted with our selves and so often do dislike the effect of too much familiarity, that though we cannot alter the inside yet we diversifie the outside with all the borrowed pomp of Art in our Habits; no doubt *Mals* converse with her self (whose disinviting eyes and look sank inwards to her breast, when they could have no regard abroad,) informed her of her defects; and that she

18 *The Life and Death*

she was not made for the pleasure or delight of Man; and therefore since she could not be honoured with him she would be honoured by him in that garb and manner of rayment He wore ——— Some Wenches have been got with Child with the only shaking of the breeches, whereof having no great hopes, she resolved to usurp and invade the Doublet, and vye and brave manhood, which she could not tempt nor allure.

I have the rather insisted on this, because it was the chief remarque of her life, as beginning and ending it; for from the first entrance into a competency of age she would wear it, and to her dying day she would not leave it off, till the infirmity and weaknesse of nature had brought her a bed to her last travail, changed it for a Waistcoat and her Pettycoats for a Winding Sheet.

These were no amiable or obliging vests, they wanted of a mutual cor-

of Mal Cutpurse. 19

correspondence and agreement with themselves, so unlikely were they to beget it abroad and from others: they served properly as a fit Covering, not any disguise of her, (according to the Primitive invention of apparel) wherein every man might see the true dimensions and proportions of body, onely here shewed the mind too:

So that by this odd dresse it came, that no man can say or affirm that ever she had a Sweet-heart, or any such fond thing to dally with her. A good Mastiffe was the onely thing she then affected and joyed in, in whose fawnings and familiarity, she took as much delight as the proudest she ever gloried in the Courtship, admiration, attraction and flatteries of her adored beauty. She was not wooed nor solicited by any man, and therefore she was Honest, though still in a reserved obedience and future service either personally or by Proxy to Venus. Her

20 *The Life and Death*

Her Nuptials and Wedding grew to be such a Proverb, as the *Kisses of Jack Adams*, any one he could light upon, that is to say, as much design of love, in one as in the other: all the *Matches* she ever intended was at *Bear-baiting*, whose pastimes afforded not leisure or admittance to the weak recreations and impertinencies of Lust.

She never had the Green sickness, that Epidemical Disease of Maidens after they have once past their puberty; she never eat Lime, Oatmeal, Coales or such like Trash, nor never changed Complexion; a great Felicity for her Vocation afterwards that was not to be afraid nor ashamed of any thing, neither to wax pale or to blush.

No Sighs or Dejected Looks, or Melancholly clouded her vigorous Spirit, or suppress her Joyiality in the retired thoughts and despair of a Husband; she was troubled with
none

of Mal Cutpurse. 21

none of those longings which poor Maidens are subject to: she had a power and strength (if not the will) to command her own pleasure of any person of reasonable ability of body, and therefore she needed not whine for it as long as she was able to beat a fellow to a compliance without the unnecessary trouble of Entreaties. Nor in all her life time was it ever known, that by meer request, and precariously she ever designed or obtained any favour whatsoever, but by a strong hand carried and performed all her Enterprises.

She made much of for a while, and was very often in company with a Shoemaker, (a profession for her Fathers sake she alwayes favoured) to whose expences she contributed all she could *wrap and run* (which is a term of Art belonging to that trade, whose Factor afterwards she was) until she found the fellow made an absolute prey of her Friendship, and squan-

22 *The Life and Death*

squandered away the money she with difficulty enough provided.

This and some such other like chouses and tricks, to which a free-ness of nature subjected her, not only took her off from the consideration or thought of Wedlock, but reduced her to some advisement which way she might maintaine herself single.

She cast about therefore what course of life she should betake herself to, and long she was not in the determination, chusing that which was the most easie, and by a good management would prove also the most profitable; called living by the quick. As you may perceive by what is already said, she had a numerous acquaintance, and amongst others, her company was known to some of the *Fortune Tellers* of the Town (from whom she then learned some snatch and relish of that Cheat) and by their Schemes and Figure-

of Mal Cutpurse. 23

Figure-flinging, was further encouraged in that her hopeful Occupation.

For a while therefore she gave law to her former open Licentiousness, and seemingly betook her self to a civilier life; that is, to a closer and cunninger way of living, not being so much in the eye of all people, by whom she was already defamed beyond remedy. But there is nothing so bad which thinks not by shoves and pretences to impose upon and deceive the Vulgar.

This her sudden reclaimedness was more admired then credited by her Neighbours, who mused what it would turn to, or what strange effect it would have. She had learned to Cuckee, and some other such beginning of Manners, but yet very abrupt, which shewed they were troublesome to her, and her new designs; however she framed and formed her self to them for their better accomplishment.

She

24 *The Life and Death*

She continued in this sort for some space of time, having entred and initiated her self into a private crew of some loose Women, who had undertaken to manage the promptnesse and dexterity of her wit to some notable advantage. Their Trade being to receive Goods which were lifted: that is to say, Stollen by Thieves, and so in a fair way sell them again; *Mal Cutpurse's* insight was very little at first in this kind of Dealing, and before she came to practise for her selfe, or do the like businesse for those Pilfering Customers, most of that Gang were either Hanged or Runne away: so that it was high Time for *Mary* to leave that dangerous and uncertain course.

But being thus seasoned, she was fit for any employment, and indeed she did but for a while forbear from entering into some such like occupation. Doing still she was, though never so little; otherwise it were impossible

of Mal Cutpurse. 25

possible she should have ever attained and arrived to that eminence and extraordinary faculty, having an absolute incontroleable power, more then ever the Law or Justice had over that Mercureal Tribe, they being entirely at her beck and command; submitting themselves and their stollen purchases to her onely Order, Will and Pleasure.

It will be high time now to recount to you the many notable passages of her Life, which from this *Foundation* rose to these ensuing *Stories*.

The Remaining Varieties and shapes of her Life, which were no way so constant as her Habit (the beloved disguise of her strange Humours) are here presented according to that tract of her own Genius, with which she pleased her self and her discourses in all company, fitted and suited to the gust and palate of her different Converses; and shall

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there-

26 *The Life and Death*

therefore re-assume her person for the better grace of this discourse in the ensuing account of her manner of Livelyhood, from the time of her Woman-hood.

Which estate having seriously considered of, and duely weighed her propensity and inclinations to the inordinacies and unrulinesse of her mind; not to be guided either by the reservedness and modesty of her own Sex, or the more imperious command of the other; she resolved to set up in a neutral or Hermaphrodite way of Profession, and stand upon her own leggs, fixed on the basis of both Concerns and Relations; like the *Colossus* of Female subtlety in the wily Arts & *ruses* of that Sex; and of manly resolution in the bold and regardlesse Rudenesses of the other, so blended and mixed together, that it was hard to say whether she were more cunning, or more impudent.

— As you may see in this Diary
of

of Mal Cutpurse. 27

of her own here following.

MAL CUTPURSE'S *Diary*.

All people do justly owe to the world an account of their Lives passed; and therefore mine being a greater debt then any other, as I have drawn more observation by unknown practises upon me, I shall dispense with reputation and credit, and following the laudable example of others, who have in part preceded me as *Seignior Gasman*, and the Spanish Tribe of Cheaters, I will freely declare my self to all my loving Neighbours, and whomsoever this relation of mine shall happen to meet with, intreating them with all Fairness and Candor, and the pity of a *Sessions House Jury*, to hear me in this my Defence and Apology, which my faults do not exceed.

I beheld my self more Obnoxious to my Fate, and to have a greater

28 *The Life and Death*

quarrel with that, then the world can have against me ; the Universe consists and is made up of Cheaters and Cheatees, saith the Learned *Albumazer*, and there is no great difference below between them ; To be excellent and happy in Villany, hath been alwayes reputed equal with a good Fame, whose wings being short, and reaching not beyond the memory of a person, can little prejudice the Fortunate Atchievements of new undertakers. My Devices were all of my own spinning, nor was I beholding to any Stale-Artifice whatsoever of any Woman preceding me, which I have not bettered, and so far forth as became the principles of such mysteries, facilitated and accomodated to the more ingenious Moderns.

I will not therefore reckon my Childish ignorances, and those extravagant Sallies of an undisciplined Wench for any thing ; for it is no matter

of Mal Cutpurse. 19

matter to know how I grew up to this, since I have laid it as a Maxime, that 'twas my Fate not Me; I doe more wonder at my self then others can do, and dare assure them that Nature doth sometimes disport her self not only in the carelesse Nativities of Dwarfs, Changelings, and such Naturals, but also in her more considerate productions; for I am confident I can boast of as much humane policy, in acquisitions, revenges, dissemblings &c. as any of the Grandees of the world, if proportionably considered.

I was hardly twenty from whence I date my self; when viewing the Manners and Customes of the Age, I see my selfe so wholly distempered, and so estranged from them, as if I had been born and bred in the Antipodes; but yet such was the kindnesse of my Stars, that for all the noyse of the New World, and the Plantations and

30 *The Life and Death*

incredibly Rich Mines of Gold and Silver said to be found there, which seemed to have been allotted for me, the discovery so patly then happening, and my friends very willing to humour it so they might have been rid of me, yet neverthelesse I escaped the Voyage, alike hating *Virginia* (the first Land possessed by the *English* in *America*) and my *Virginity*, the manner thus.

My Friends perceiving my untoward dispositions designed me,* thither, where there was

* *Mal Cutpurse*
spirited for
New England. no doubt of such manly work and sport I affected, and where the necessity of Women be they what they would, could not but commend me to some *Jack* as good as my self, whose Dominion over me might subdue that violence of my spirit, or else I should be so broke by hard labour, that I would of my own accord return to a womanly and civil beha-

of Mal Cutpurse. 31

behaviour. There was then no noyse or talk of *Spirits*, and I was so generally known that I thought there could be no such tricks shewed me; but poor silly Wench as I was, being under pretence of a Fair, and some Matches at *Gravesend* trayned down and invited thither by Water, I was carried aboard a *New England* man to drink strong Waters, which were nothing else but the distillation of mine eyes boyling with Fury and impatience; for in my grief there was nothing womanly.

I was left sitting upon a Chest under Decks blessing my self from the Company I see halling and stowing their Goods, who (ever and anon would laugh at me) but no way dreaming, I was to be part of the venture or to be concerned in their voyage, till the Boatswayn came to me; and half mild half sowre, askt me what Provision I had aboard, and where I wou'd bestow my self; I re-

32 *The Life and Death*

plied as roughly, I would give him no account, but straightwith suspecting the manner of the question called for my Company; when the whole Crew of these *Cannibals* fell into such a passion of laughter, that I began to consult of an Escape. but was presently prevented and put in the *Hold*, where I found some others in the like miserable Condition.

This sudden misfortune being the first check and controulment of all my proceedings, did not so much for the present stupifie me as it did soon after quicken me to the thoughts of my Deliverance, which having understood could not be effected without the Captain's privy or permission, (being sold to a private Merchant, the first beginner of this inhumane way of Merchandize, (whom I afterwards when he came to a miserable distresse for requital helpt unto a *Beadle*) I was forced to await his coming on board, when
having

of Mal Cutpurse. 33

having the liberty of the Deck, I very observantly and with a submissive gesture presented my self before him, and with many a briny tear told him of this injury done me and my Friends (of whom God knows I had few who were not privy to the Design) which would not fail to be severely revenged on those Complices of this Treachery, and with such protestations of my Parentage and their certain lamentations over me, together with my own innocence and civil behaviour, I at last won upon this good natured Master, who was not yet hardned this way, to suffer my Escape, having promised Him very fair and largely when I should rencounter him at London.

Thither, by the help of the money I had otherwise intended, and which I now gave to the Coxon, I hyed, very exceedingly blith that I thus got off, musing of nothing but revenge for this disgrace upon my.

34 *The Life and Death*

Companions, but such occasion seldom proffers it self to forlorn people without great disadvantage; and I was not so well recovered of my former fright as to venture upon such desperate and dangerous Enemies, who might have other as subtle devices against me, being alone, and as I said friendless. Therefore abandoning those Hot-spur Meditations, to which I was very prone, I resolved to betake my self to some *sanctuary* from the like attempts, whose priviledges might secure me, while I could better provide for my self.

I had but very little choice, so I listd my self of another Colony or Plantation (but who neither sow nor reap) of the *Divers* or *File-clyers*. A cunning Nation being a kind of Land *Pyrats*, trading altogether in other mens *Bottoms*, for no other Merchandizes then *Bullion* and ready *Coine*, and keep most of the great *Fairs* and *Marts* of the world. They
are

of Mal Cutpurse. 35

are very expert Mathematicians, but excellently good at Dyalling; as also they are rare Figure Flingers; and most dexterous at the Tacticks; they had been long incorporated, and had their Governours and Assistants as other Worshipful Companies; and had a good stock for the maintenance of their Trade. At my admission among them, I was examined to several questions, relating to my finesse and capacity of being a Member; to which I gave such satisfactory answers, as rendred me very acceptable to be one of their Community. I remember they viewed my Hands, not only to see whether I had not been manumitted at Sessions, but if they were not naturally fitted and made convenient for the Exercise of the Trade, being indeed the neatest *Manufacture* of the world. The best Signes and Marks of a happy and industrious hand, is a long middle Finger, equally fitted with

36 *The Life and Death*

with that they call the fools or first Finger ; nor can any Surgeon or Doctor of Physick read a learned Anatomy Lecture of the *Nerves, Fibre, and Arteries* of the same ; then these secant and cutting Empericks as justly challenging the name of Chirurgy as they. Above all things they abhor a Clumsy Fat Finger, as apt to slip the Cole which they put for money, and not carry it cleverly ; and they hate a Bungler as much as a Duncie. They have several Forms or sorts of Pick-pockets, they have one fellow alwayes in company when they go about this Employment, whom they call a Bulk, that is, to make some quarrel in the streets, or else obstruct the passage while the Whipsters do the Feat ; and then there is another ready whom they call the Rub, into whose Hands the prey is conveyed, and he clearly carries it away. But of these I shall speak more at large hereafter.

I had

of Mal Cutpurse. 37

I had no great promising symptoms of a lucky Mercureal in my Fingers, for they had not been used to any slight and fine work; but I was judged by these Palmisters from the hardnesse and largenesse of the Table of my Hand, to be very well qualified for a receiver and entertainer of their fortunate Atchievements, and was thereupon with the usual Customs and Ceremonies admitted. Now I bethought my self how I should govern my self in this Condition of Life; I could not but foresee the danger, but was loath to relinquish the profit; every snip or share I got as necessary to the chest, was like green fruit to me, sowre and sweet, nor did I ever *digest* it, but with a conceited sore throat; yet I could not forsake my Company though I was very wary how far I engaged, till a years impunity or more had so stocked me, that I resolved to run no longer the desperate hazard of these Courses

38 *The Life and Death*

Courses (which I see so many of my Comrades monthly expiate with their Lives, &c. at least by whipping and the satisfaction of Bridewell Work-house) but to address my self to a very fair expedient, whereby I might live, if not Honestly, yet Safely; a mean betwixt the strokes of Justice, and the Torments of Poverty.

I was well known to all the Gang, and by my good dealing with them not a little in their favour; I never wrangled for a share, or when I had the dividend to make, did I ever with-hold any of their Dues; so that I was commonly an Umpire in their Quarrels, and thereby did save them from the malicious discovery of one another, which they were sensible of, and did therefore look upon me with more an ordinary respect. I would now and then too out of my own Pocket, lend some of the most desperate of them a Crown or two

of Mal Cutpurse. 39

two, to keep them from apparant hazards of doing such Robberies which fatall necessity prompted them to, whereby I saved them often out of the Hangmans Clutches; so that among all the Thieveries they did, my name was never heard of; for they made it the chiefest of their Religion to Conceale me, and to Conceal nothing of their designs from me; nor did I ever openly accompany with them, save at our own retreats and places of meeting, where we had all possible privacy and security.

I held very good Correspondence now also with those Grandees of this function of Thievery, the Blades and Hacks of the High-way; who having heard from their inferiour Tribe this repine of my equitable dealing, did deposite in my hands some of their Coine against a Rainy day. Money was a portable and asportable Commodity, but the luggage

40 *The Life and Death*

gage and lumber of goods purchased by Burglary, I was shy to deale withal; for they serve commonly as the traces and sents to the owners to recover them; and I thank my Fates, I had still the luck to avoid that inconvenience, though I have been enticed with Moveables of good value, which I abandoned to other Receptories.

Nay, I never harboured any *Fel-lon* under my Roof, which from a private Chamber at first, was now converted into a publique dwelling, well stored and well accomodated; the difficulty of entrance which was much scrupled at first by my Land-lord, I removed with the all powerful charm of Silver; and there are few of those in City or Town, who for the like advantages will not admit of any Tenants, be they of what report or Trade they will; Houses were not built to stand empty, nor I Born to stand Idle. However I did no way.

of Mal Cutpurse. 41

way abuse his House, but made it rather an Exchange and place of Entercourse, then prostituted it by any unseemly or lewd action; by this means I kept my self free from all manner of suspicion, save that I was taken for a Woman of a single and strange Humour, and lookt upon as one of the conceits of the Times which laboured under very new and Exotick Fashions.

Among the rest *Tobacco* was grown to be the great *Mode*, and much in use, and a sect of *Swaggerers* there were which from thence were denominated the *Puffers* and high *Huffers*; I was mightily taken with this vanity, because of its affected singularity; and no Woman before me ever smoakt any, though I had a great many to follow my example, how commendably I know not. I had nothing or would have nothing to do, but what might better be left undone; all easie and proffering deceit

42 *The Life and Death*

was my businessse, and my recreations or pastime was suiteable and like it; for I grew to be more reserved in my boysterous exercises of bayting, &c. and could content to be a spectator and a better onely, where a Pipe of Tobacco did much accomodate me.

One time, an unlucky knave, at a Grocers shop where I used to sit and talk in the intervals of my Trade, which I could not patiently awayt at Home; at my demand of a Pipe of smock, presented me with a Pipe full of Gunpowder, covered at Top with Tobacco; which little suspecting I took, and suddenly it fired in my mouth with such a blast and stench, belching and throwing out the Ashes, that it was a little resemblance of mount *Aetna*. I was all agast et present, but perceiving it was a Boyes Roguery, I restrained my passion further then flinging the pipe at his Head, but sorlook the Shop, resolving of no less satis-

of Mal Cutpurse. 43

satisfaction then *blowing up* both of Master and Man by *Engines* and *Devices* in convenient time.

In my house I should have told you, I set up a kind of *Brokery* or a distinct factory for *Jewels*, *Kings* and *Watches*, which had been pinched or stolen any manner of way, at never so great distances from any person; I might properly enough call it the *Insurance Office* for such Merchandize, for the Losers were sure upon Composition to recover their Goods again, and the Pyrates were as sure to have good ransome, and I so much in the Gross for Brokage without any more danger; the *Hue and Cry* being alwayes directed to me for the Discovery of the Goods not the *Takers*.

A Lawless Vocation yet bordering between illicit and convenient, more advantagious by far to the injured, then the Courts of Justice and benefits of the Law, and more equal
to

44 *The Life and Death*

to the wrong-doers, who by such an hazardous seizure have as themselves think, an equal propriety in their Spoil, by yielding and restoring it upon such indifferent Terms as my Markets and Prizes usually were.

Sometimes I met with obstinate Thieves, who would by no means part with their Purchases, but would stand to their Possession as stiffly as if it had by right accrued to them, yet such a hank I had upon them, by working with their Partakers, and using my Authority, that I alwayes prevailed, and made them stand to my agreement and arbitrement. Nor could ever your *Thief-catchers* do any good upon these sort of people. My House was the *Algiers* where they traffiqued in safety without the Bribes to those *Fellows*, and publicly exposed what they had got without the danger of Inquisition or Examination or Fees of silence. I could.

of Mal Cutpurse. 45

could have told in what quarter of the Town a Robbery was done the Evening before by very early day next morning, and had a perfect Inventory of what they had taken as soon as it came to the *Dividend*; Nor were ever the Custom-House Bills shewing what Goods and from whence they are imported more duely published for the advantage of *Trade*, then was the Account of those Robberies entred with me for the satisfaction of the *Owners*.

So that I may be said to have made a perfect regulation of this *thievish Mystery*, and reduced it to certain rules and orders, which during my administration of the Mistresship and Government thereof, was far better managed then afterwards it was; nor were the Robberies so frequent nor so grievous then as when my Discipline was cast off, and this sort of Cattel left to themselves, when I became obnoxious to these
reform-

46 *The Life and Death*

reforming Times just before the more licentious and legaller way of stealing, called *Plunder*, who needed no body to sell their *stollen Goods*, having Authority (though little better then mine) to countenance them therein. For my part I profess I held it lawfuller to take a Pound by the Old then a Pin by the New way, and the *guilty persons* concerned therein to stand in need of a *Pardon*, and to make *ample restitution*, more then any *Newgate-Bird*.

Insomuch that I very well remember a *Coyner* that was hanged at *Tyburn* in the beginning of the War for *Counterfeiting* and *Clipping of half Crowns*, out of a just indignation of the partial Fates, who had singled him out of so many Offenders to be sacrificed to the Lawes, then more impudently and publickly affronted in his last words, used this Expression, *That he was adjudged to die but for Counterfeiting of a half Crown, but these*

of Mal Cutpurse. 47

those that *Usurped* the whole Crown and stole away its Revenue, and had Counterfeited its Seal, were above justice and escap'd unpunished. — I sympathized with the poor man; for I was well acquainted with him, and knew he did it out of Necessity, and that mistaken unhappy Maxime, *That it was no deceit, to deceive the Deceivers*, such were the Grandees of those wretched Times.

I had forgot to tell you the place of this my *dwelling* which slipt me the rather, because few men need to be told where the Exchange or Cheap-side Standard stands, since my Habitation was little lesse Famous; but since that particular is very requisite, and to shew you I was no *Lady Errant* or this Story a *Romanee*, know ye that I lived within 2 doors of the *Globe Tavern* in *Fleetstreet* over against the Conduit, where I dispensed justice likewise among the
wrang-

48 *The Life and Death*

wrangling Tankard-bearers, exchanging often their burden of Water for their burden of Beer as far the lighter, though not so well portable; for which kindness I had the Command of those Waterworks, being Admiralle of the Vessels that sayl upon Folks backs (as they have Ships in *China* which sayl over dry Land) and unlade themselves in Kitchens.

Being thus seated and lookt upon by my Neighbours with a civil though wondring respect, I was no way difficult or curiously cautelous in my Conversation, but with all freedome in a fair way (as they term it) allowed myself in my humours. In one of which comming home late through *Ludgate*, with a *Lanthorne* carried before me; a *Shoomaker* or (as his due) a *Traslator*, being then Constable, very well known of me; was pleased for all my faire Words and Account to
send

of Mal Cutpurse. 49

send me to the *Counter* for a *Rat* ; I made many reluctancies to the contrary, and when I see I must go, did seriously threaten him with being resolved of satisfaction from him ; the Watch were very unwilling (for I had alwaies some of them retained to my service) to carry me ; but a Constable in his Watch is a Prince, and there was no dispute of his will. So away they carried me, and put me into the Hole, for I was determined to see the worst of that Prison, and to learn at this cheap experience (for I cared not a *Fart* Sir *Reverence* what this fellow could do) the tricks and devices of the place of which I have heard such strange Tales.

It was neer One a Clock when I came in, but I found the *Turnkey* and the Prisoners in such a readinesse to entertaine me and other Commers, as industrious people are about Six in the morning to betake themselves

50 *The Life and Death*

to their businesse. For in this little *Round House*, and *Epitome* of the world (which is but a large Prison) the Sun never sets, but twinkleth and slumbereth a while under some Cloud of drowiness, and ariseth again out of the Ocean of Drink, just about the time as we fancy and calculate the morning. The first salute they gave me was their demand of *Garnish*, which I stubbornly refusing to pay, they called their Constable, the chief *Officer* in this Garrison of the Law, to make seizure of something equivalent to their due, which by inevitable Custom amounted to half a Crown. This Constable who had not seen other light, nor breathed other Air for Thirty years, and had renounced the world out of quarrel for it's neglect of him; having seconded the demand with an imperious look, which is the sad prognostick of a stripping; laid hold on my Cloaths, and called to the
Cham-

of Mal Cutpurse. 51

Chamberlaine, another of his Officer, to fetch in the drink; who recoyling from me, startled with the new guise of a Doublet and Petty-coat, he began to conjure & ask who I was, being very willing to come to a composition, not knowing how to lumber or engage my Rayment which would fit no body else. I laught at this puzzle, and drew forth a Crown and bid them drink on; in all which time I heard not a word of other concern, then the depth of the Can, and Two or Three hearty prayers for more of my Condition; to help out the tediousnesse of time, which lay upon their hands and could not be disposed of, but in the clack and din of the Pots, and rules of Tipling.

Next morning came the Constable and had me before my Lord Mayor, and there laid, to my charge my unseasonable and suspicious walking; aggravating that offence

52 *The Life and Death*

with the strange manner of my Life. I never wanted confidence so much as I did now to defend my self ; but having excused the necessity of my being abroad so late, by a good Plea of a Womans labour, (at which indeed nor no other, I was ever present) I humbly prayed his Lordship to passe by those other accidents, and new matter to this offence, and remit me to my good behaviour, which at last he was contented to do; and upon a small fine discharged me of this Constable, but not the Constable of me.

I could never digest this disgrace, though I computed with my self that I was not born to live without them; but I heard it frequently reported, here; this Headborough vapoured what a trick he had served me, and it galled me to the very Heart to be abused and to be jeered of it; besides by such a Widgeon, who had nothing tolerable in him but his Wealth,

of Mal Cutpurse. 53

Wealth, which in truth made him the rather intolerable. I studied Twenty wayes how to effect my revenge, which I would have to draw as little envy or trouble upon me as possible; nor would I gratifie my spleen with any thing but what should tickle not vex it; at last this project came in my Head; I knew the fellow to be Vain-glorious, and altogether as covetous; having so understood from his Neighbours how he used to boast of his Friends in the Countrey, and his Wealth at Home; by some narrower inspection of my Emissaries, I found him to have some relations after his report about *Ludlow*, in the Confines of *Hereford* and *Shropshire*; whereupon I procured one of my Inns, of whom I was furnished with store and variety to put this trick upon my Gentleman.

In a Summer Evening something late, all Booted and Spurred with a
D 3 Horse

54 *The Life and Death*

Horse in his hand, and covered with Dust, my *Mercury* comes to the *Old Baily*, and very solicitously and hastily enquires out Mr. *Wall* (so was this fellow called) and by the Neighbours was informed which was his House; The fellow followes their directions, yet like an ignorant Countrey-man that dared not to go one step without new directions in this wood of the City, kept the same gaping inquiry in his Countrey Tone, where Mr. *Wall* dwelt: The people thought the fellow mad, but it prepared Mr. *Wall* with very great solemnity to receive this importunate Visitant. Being come to his Door he with the same earnestnesse and elevation of voice demands which is his House, he gravely answers beyond the question, *for want of a better, He was the Master of it*; the fellow seeming not to understand that City phrase, interrogates again whether Mr. *William Wall* lives there

or

of Mal Cutpurse. 55

or no; to which he replies in some doubt and softly, what would he have with him? The Chonce, to put him out of his dumps, tells him, that if he be the Gentleman, He hath some News out of the Country which most nearly concerned him to impart to him, having come a purpose to be the first Messenger of such glad tydings; pray Sir come in quoth *Wall*, you are very heartily welcome, pray how do all our Friends in the Country? very well quoth this *Spirit* except your Uncle that is Dead, but yet we hope he is best of all; a little before his Death he made his *Will* and Sir, hath made you his Heir, and left you all his personal Estate besides, save a few Legacies: As to day he is buried by some of his Kindred; but before I came away, knowing my Deceased Master your Uncles mind; I have inventoried all the Goods, and lockt up his Evidences and Bonds, and the Money and Plate

56 *The Life and Death*

in one of the great Chests, and have brought the Key along with me, which I here present you.

To have seen the perplext looks of this *Cobler*, which he laboured to frame to a Countenance of grief, but could not for his more prevalent joyes which appeared in the better half of his Mouth, and made him to grin as if he were a Shitting; would have made a man to Spew. At length after a deep Sigh and Ejaculation of the certainty of Death; he unridled his Face, and very heartily welcomed the Fellow; brought him into his *Kitchen*, sent for strong Beer and a Glass of Sack, and a hot Joint from *Pye-Corner*; commanded his Wife to make him what cheer she could: and since there was no recalling of the Dead, though he was a Dear *Uncle* of his, (Ah Wife quoth he, I have lost a Friend, and a Friend) to pluck up their hearts and be merry. During this preparation, the

of Mal Cutpurse. 57

the Fellow stands at some distance, plucks off his Hat and so keeps it, and much ado there was to perswade him to be covered; when he made bold, he sayd to desire his new Masters favour that he might continue the Bayliffe and Steward of his Lands; to which Cob readily assented, fore-praising his Honesty and Faithfulnesse.

After Supper they resumed the discourse, with which Wall being as much delighted as assured; they began to consider of their journey, the expedition whereof this fellow very much urged, in regard of those poor Kinred of his Uncles, who no doubt would make Havock of those household Goods which were left about the house, and perchance might venture on the Locks, and seize the rest; whereupon all hast was used to begin the Journey, but the Cobler would not disgrace himself among his Kinred, and therefore would

58 *The Life and Death*

stay till he had provided himself and his Wife with new Mourning Cloaths and things sutable to his new Fortunes, with a Black Cloak for the Man, who was to attend them down into the Countrey, and bring them to this Inheritance.

Accordingly they late forward, (the *Cobler* having discharged his Mans Horse-hire, and other expenses besides Dyet and Lodging during his stay in *London*) and in his Inns on the way was very officiously waited on by this new Servant the 4 first dayes Journey; lodging the last night as this Impostor said, within Ten miles of the place whither they were to go: but early in the morning up gets my Youth, saddles his Horse with the Portmanteau and his Cloak in it, and away Gallops another Road, leaving his Master to find out the *Eutopia* of his great Wind-fall; who arising and missing his Guide and Servant, that was lost beyond enquiry.

of Mal Cutpurse. 59

quiry, began to suspect the Cheat; but covetousnesse prevailing against reason, he resolved to pursue the adventure: and having the Town in mind, which he was informed was no further then Ten Miles off; he rode thither where he could hear of no such man, nor no such matter.

Vext and yet ashamed to enquire any further, or to make a discovery of his own folly, the old Sinkater and his *Joan* turn'd their Horse head and sorrowfully depart, cursing the hour they ever saw this Cheating Rogue; and to add to their misfortunes, their Money (expecting a full Treasure and Recruit out of the aforesaid Chest) was drawn very low, so that they were forced to make long Journeys and short Meals in their way homewards; and yet notwithstanding to keep themselves, were faine to part with their Horse at *St. Albans*, whom his hard Travel and harder Feeding had brought down to a third.

60 *The Life and Death*

third of the price he cost them in *London* ; where on Foot wearied and wasted with vexation, they at last arrived, and in the Evening crept into their House to avoid the laughter of their Neighbours, among whom before their setting forth, they had noised their sudden Wealth ; the defeat whereof at length coming to their knowledge, never was poor Old Cuckold so Flouted and Jeered at ; but time and shame wear out all things.

Though I knew not of his Arrival, yet I had notice how farre my project was prosecuted by my *Sancho Panca*, whom I ordered to spread the report thereof abroad ; which being made publique, I one day as I passed by his dore on purpose, took occasion to gratulate him with his great good Fortune : and askt him how he lik't the Air of his Lands, and whither his Mannor House were conveniently seated ; he replied little,
but

of Mal Cutpurse. 61

but with some merriness retorted the Counter to my better remembrance; I have discharged my memory already said I, and have quit scores with you, be you now pleased to remember it, which I gave him constant occasion of till his dying day.

I now followed my Vocation, which in a full and silent streame flowed in upon me; the clack of my dealing bringing other Grist to my Mill then it was first erected for; so that my House was become the onely Office of *Addresse*, whereunto all people resorted for all manner of businesse. The *Astrologers Figure Flingers* were not so universally practised; nor had the Cunning man any open Trade since the Ominous end of Dr. *Lamb* stoned by the Apprentices in the streets; no curiosity of a Love-sick Maid invited her to the remedy of their helplesse Art, In Revealing, a Person whose properties, qualities, and features they had

62 *The Life and Death*

had hinted before to the wise Master whose skill like a true Looking-glasse should represent the *Idea* of their Fancy. People were not so fond of the Stars and their cheating Secretaries, as to consult their advice to be solved of those Oracles which their Folly and Dotage had made, untill the world was mad and the angry unsolicited *Planets* in their late miserable revolution set folkes a gadding after the riddling Prognosticks and hab-nab events of *Lilly* and his ignorant Gang. Nothing but Losses and the certainty of the recovery of them engaged them to my Office, where without the fallacy and pretended operations of a *Scheme*, or any Familiar save a constant Correspondence with my Imps, I alwayes satisfied them.

Once a Gentleman that had lost his Watch out of his Pocket by the busie fingers of a *Pick-pocket*, came very anxiously to me, enquiring if I could

of Mal Cutpurse. 63

could help him to it again, I demanded of him the Marks and Signs with the time when and where he lost it, or by what Croud or other accident; he replied, that coming through *Shoolane*, there was a quarrel betwixt two men, one of whom as he afterwards heard was a *Graſier*, whom they had ſet in *Smithfield*; having ſeen him receive the ſumme of 200 l. or thereabouts in Gold, and it being a hazardous and great purchaſe; the choice and moſt excellent of the Art were aſſembled to do this Maſter piece; there was one *Bat Rud* as He was ſince informed, who was the Bulk; who obſerving the man held his Hand in the Pocket where his Gold was, juſt in the middle of the Lane whitherto they dogged him, overthrew a Barrel trimming at an *Alehouſe* door, while one behind the *Graſier* puſht him over, who withall throws down *Bat* who was ready for the fall; betwixt theſe two, in the ground

64 *The Life and Death*

ground arose a quarrel, the *Pick-pocket* demanding satisfaction, while his Comrades interposing (after two or three blowes) in favour of the Countrey-man (who had drawn his hands out of his Fob to defend himself,) soon drew out his Treasure; and while he was looking, on the scuffle, some of them had lent him a hand too and Fingered out his Watch.

I smiled at the adventure, and told him he should hear within a day or two at the furthest; to enhance my Market, perceiving the Gentleman very earnest to recover it: but I knew not by what ill fortune, the Gentleman perceiving amongst my Magazine of Watches, whereof I had alwayes good store in my Window; his own as he confidently presumed, pretended to come to me againe according to my appointment, but suddenly returned with a *Constable*, who bolted in upon me, and made seizure

of Mal Cutpurse. 65

seizure of the said Watch, and with-
all had me before a Justice.

This was the first Criminal Fact I
ever was judicially taxed with,
wherefore I requested two of my
Neighbours, (for I bore much upon
my Honesty and Innocence) to ac-
company me thither, where notwith-
standing my protestations that I had
had the Watch so many years, and
that there might be such a similitude
in the Watch as was not easily dis-
cernable, and that hitherto I had li-
ved untainted; yet notwithstanding
my *Mittimus* was made, yet by my
Friends request, and upon their se-
curity I was bayled, to answer it the
next *Sessions*, and the Constable com-
manded to keep the Watch in his
Custody in the *Interim*, and to have
it produceable at my Tryal: which
being come, I was Arraigned and
held up my hand at the Sessions
House, the Court being full thronged
to see and hear my Defence. I had
before

66 *The Life and Death*

before offered to take up the busi-
ness, but they stood upon such un-
reasonable terms, thinking I would
never hazard my life, or indeed my
name at that Tribunal (where I
could not but be suspected) that I
resolved to stand the Issue, having
concluded on an expedient to bring
me off, if Fortune should favour the
boldness of the attempt. When I
had pleaded not Guilty, it came to
this Issue, whether that Watch for
which I was indicted, was the Gen-
tlemans Watch or no; whereupon
the Constable was called, to deliver
the Watch, that the Gentleman up-
on his Oath might declare the truth;
when, as the Constable was crouding
into the Court, one of my small Of-
ficers dived into his Pocket, and
fought out the evidence against me
and departed invisible.

My Lord Mayor was very much
incensed at this affront, and conclu-
ded it was my designe: but in spite
of

of Mal Cutpurse. 67

of all their anger, the Jury could not but acquit me for the present; with the Courts terrible threatnings of me, and Menaces to look to my future deportment, which I took very good heed of, resolving to come no more into their Clutches, and to be more reserved and wary in my way and practise.

But this did no way discourage my Continuance therein, I was grown of late acquainted with a new sort of Thieves called the *Heavers*, more fitly *Plagiaries*, whose Employment was stealing of *Shop Books*, the manner thus; They would cruise up and down a Stall when the Master was at Dinner or other way absent, about *Drapers* or *Mercers* especiall, whose Books lie commonly neer the Door upon a Desk; and upon the turning of the backs of the Servants, who are commonly walking to and fro, snatch it off and be gone, with an intent only of some redemp-

68 *The Life and Death*

redemptory Money upon its Delivery, for which they had the Convenience of my Mediation, which was ordinarily no less then three or four Pieces award, for the pains the Thief had taken, for I proceeded alwayes by a *quantum Meruit* : the Apprentices willing to give any thing rather then their selves and their Parents should be liable to make satisfaction for so great a damage happned by their Carelesse-
ness.

I had another sort called the *Kings Takers*, these were men as much of their Heels as their Hands : in the dusk of the Evening or at high Noon when few people were ready for the race, they would run by a Shop and catch up any of the Wares or Goods lying upon a Stall and away with it ; sometimes they got Prizes of good Value, and such as by no means might be lost, being either sold, or some remarkable Commodity or
other

of Mal Cutpurse. 69

other, which the Losers were sure upon trucking with me to have back again.

While I thus raigned, free from the danger of the Common Law, some promooting Apparator set on by an adversary of mine, whom I could never punctually know, cited me to appear in the Court of the *Arches*, where was an Accusation exhibited against me for wearing un-decent and manly apparel. I was advised by my Proctor to demur to the Jurisdiction of the Court, as for a Crime, if such, not cognizable there or elsewhere; but he did it to spin out my Cause, and get my Mony; for in the conclusion, I was sentenced there to stand and do Penance in a White Sheet at *Pauls Cross* during morning Sermon on a Sunday.

They might as soon have shamed a Black Dog as Me, with any kind of such punishment; for saving the reverence due to those who enjoyned it,

70 *The Life and Death*

it, for a halfe-penny I would have Travelled to all the Market Towns in *England* with it, and been as proud of it as that Citizen who rode down to his Friends in his Livery-Gown and Hood: or that Parson who being enjoyned to wear the Surplice contrary to his will, when he had once put it on, wore it constantly in his own and other Towns, while he was complained of, for his abusing that decent Ministerial Garment. I am sure there were some few who had no cause to be merry or sport themselves at the sight; for my Emissaries were very busie without any regard to the sacrednesse of the place, but in revenge of this disgrace intended me, spoyled a good many Cloaths by cutting off part of their Cloaks and Gowns, and sending them home as naked behind as an Apes Tayle; which espying, I remembered that story of another Crue of these Pick-pockets, who coming to
a Mar-

of Mal Cutpurse. 71

a Market Town where there was next day a Fair to be kept; fearing to be discovered in that concourse of so many people, resolved to do their businesse that very evening, the people being very busie in fitting their stalls, and some little Trading stirring besides. Their first consultation was how to draw the Folks together to make one job of it, which was agreed on in this manner; one of them (the worst at the *knife*) pretending to be an ignorant Clown, got himself into the Pillory, at the bruit whereof the whole Town ran together to see the Spectacle, where those Cutters so plyed their work, while they gazed, laugh'd and stared, that they left not any of them either Purse or Money; the very keeper of the Pillory who frolickt at this curious fetch, being served in the same manner as he stood neer the fellow: who seeing the work done and the signe given him that they were departed, having

72 *The Life and Death*

having continued an hour in that Condition, and then at his desire released ; told the Spectators that he hoped they could not lay any thing to his charge if they had suffered any losse, for he was in no capacity to do it: when clapping their hands to their Side, and then to their Heart, they cryed out with one voyce, their Purfes were Cut, while in this Confusion he slunk away to his Companions, who were out of the reach of apprehension.

I did not say as much whatever I thought when my penance was over ; but this dealing with me therefore was so far from reclaiming me to the sobriety of decent apparel, that I was ~~not~~ offended with it, or others ~~of my sex~~, could by no means indure at any time before the Fincall and Modish Excesses of attire, into which Women were then, as in all Ages very curious, to the wasting and impoverishing their Husbands, beyond

of Mal. Cutpurse. 73

beyond what they are able to afford towards such lavish and Prodigall Gallantry.

There was a pleasant story which I used to prate of, of a Neighbour of mine that was given this way; being on a time in her Bravery, her Husband liking and not liking the riches and Gaudery of her Cloaths, by way of Droll accosted her in this manner; Sweet-heart quoth he, you are very fine, but you never think of the charge, there is never a time I have any thing to do with you, but it stands me in a Crown towards this very superfluity. Husband replied the Dame, it is your own fault that you pay so dear: for if you would do it oftner, it would not be above a Groat a time: for I would rather take my Money in such Quids and Parcells, then in Sums and in Gross, provided the Coine be as Currant, neither clipt, washt, nor Counterfeit.

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74 *The Life and Death*

There was also a fellow a contemporary of mine, as remarkable as myself, called *Anniseed-water Robin*: who was cloathed very near my Antick Mode, being an Hermaphrodite, a person of both Sexes; him I could by no means endure, being the very derision of natures impotency, whose redundancy in making him Man and Woman, had in effect made him neither, having not the strength nor reason of the Male, nor the fineness nor subtlety of the Female: being but one step removed from a Natural Changeling, a kind of mockery (as I was upbraided) of me, who was then Counted for an Artificial one. And indeed I think nature owed me a spight in sending that thing into the world to Mate and Match me, that nothing might be without a peer; and the vacuum of Society be replenished, which is done by the likeness and similitude of manners: but contrariwise it begot in
me

of Mal Cutpurse. 75

me a naturall abhorrence of him with so strange an Antipathy, that what by threats and my private instigating of the Boyes to fall upon, and throw Durt at him, I made him quit my Walk and Habitation, that I might have no further scandall among my Neighbours, who used to say, *here comes Malls Husband.*

I shall never forget my fellow Humourist *Banks* the Vintner in *Cheapside* who taught his Horse to dance, and shooed him with Silver. Among other fantastick discourse, one day he would needs engage me in a frolick upon a wager of 20 l. which was that I should ride from *Charing-Crosse* to *Shoreditch* a straddle on Horseback in Breeches and Doublet, Boots and Spurs, all like a man *cap a pe.* I was all for such sudden whims (as old Noy said when the Shepherd laid him on his Head with a Crook, which he being furiously askt called a whim; who returning to

E 2 his

76 *The Life and Death*

his Company from whom just before he had in great hast parted ; and being demanded by them the reason thereof, replied that a whim took him in his Head. Just so it took me, I accepted the Condition and prepared me with all the before named particulars against the day, and to doe something more then my Bargain; I got a Trumpet and Banner and threw it behind my back as Trumpeters use to wear it,

The day appointed being come I set forward, none suspecting me, yet every body gazing on me, because a Trumpeter in those dayes was as rare as a Swallow in Winter, every body wondring what it meant, and taking it for a Prodigy. I proceeded in this manner undiscovered till I came as far as *Bishopsgate*, where passing under the Gate a plaguy Orange Wench knew me, and no sooner let me passe her, but she cried out ! *Mal Cutpurse on Horseback*,
which

of Mal Cutpurse. 77

which set the people that were passing by, and the Folks in their Shops a hooting and hollowing as if they had been mad ; winding their cries to this deep note, *Come down thou shame of Women or we will pull thee down* : I knew not well what to doe, but remembering a Friend I had, that kept a Victualling House a little further, I spurred my Horse on and recovered the place, but was hastily followed by the rabble, who never ceased cursing of me, the more soberer of them laughing and merrily chatting of the Adventure. In my own thoughts I was quite another thing : that I was Squireesse to *Dulcinea of Tobosso*. the most incomparably beloved Lady of *Don Quixot*, and was sent of a Message to him from my Mistress in the Formalities of *Knight Errantry*, that I might not offend against any *punctilio* thereof which he so strictly required ; and also to be the more acceptable to

78 *The Life and Death*

my lovely *Sancho Pancha*, that was trained up by this time in Chivalry, whom I would surprize in this disguise. These quirks and quilllets at that instant posselt my fancy, but presently I had other representations. Me thought those about the door were the very people that gazed at *Jane Shore* in her scornful and unpitied misery when she laid herself down to die in one of the adjacent Ditches. The undeserved lamentable Fate of that noble Dame and the penance she had formerly underwent, wherein I was something like her, awakened me out of these imaginations which way I should be rid of the people; for I did not like that rudeness which manifested it self in their Speeches: when by chance came by a great Wedding on foot, at the instant that five or six Bayliffs had arrested a man, whom the multitude endeavoured to rescue, so while part was scuffling and part gazing

of Mal Cutpurse. 79

zing at the Bride and Bridegroom, they had forgot me and gave me an opportunity of getting out the back way riding clear for *Newington*, where I rested my self in my Chamber not daring to come out till toward Evening, and so came late into *Shoreditch*, where I paced the same way back again to the winning of my Wager, and my great Content, to see my self thus out of danger, which I would never tempt again in that nature.

This was so famed and noised all about Town that I durst not appear for the Boyes: I therefore betook my self to the instruct on of my Parrets and tutoring my Dogs, whereof I had nine of a most lovely sort of Shocks, who were trimmed & looked to with the same Care as other folks did their Children. I alwayes laid them in Trundle Beds, with Sheets and Blankets, and was as choice in their Diet, boyling as

80 *The Life and Death*

Gentlemen doe for their Hunting Dogs a Pot on purpose for them with Broth and meat) and they well shewed their breeding and education, never bewraying the Chambers, nor any part of the House : In the exact and curious cleannesse whereof I alwayes much delighted, none of my Neighbours equalling me in the neatnes thereof : which was the onely part of womanhood I did.

Nor were the Ornaments of my house less curious & pleasing in Pictures, then in the delight of Looking Glasses, so that I could see my sweet self all over in any part of my rooms. This gave occasion to folks to say that I used Magical Glasses, wherein I could show the Querists (those that resorted to me for Information) those that stole their Goods in the resemblance of their proper persons ; as likewise to others, curious to know the Features and shapes of their Husbands

of Mal Cutpurse. 81

bands that should be, the very true and perfect Idea of them, as is very credibly and consistently enough reported of your *African* Sorcerers; and we have a Tradition of it in the Story of *Jane Shores* Husband, who by one of the like Glasses saw the unchast embraces of his Wife and *Edward* the 4th. But this was a Fable as to mine, though I could have wished it had been true or have known which way to make it so; for I should have needed no other means to make me rich; seeing the very report of it did me some benefit by bringing folks thither upon that score, whom I could satisfy without the help of *Old Nick*; and my Cheats not so transparent.

There was a shameless Jade, as noted in this Town as my self at this time, but for far more enormous Actions; she was called *Abigail*, her way of living (she being a kind of Natural) was by ringing the Bells.

82 *The Life and Death*

with her Coats for a Farthing, and coming behind any Gentleman for the same hire, and clapping him on the back as he turned his Head, to kisse him, to the enraging of some Gentlemen so far as to cause them to draw their Swords and threaten to kill her. This stinking Slut, who was never known to have done so to any woman; by some body's setting her on to affront me, served me in the same manner. I got hold of her and being neer at home, drag'd her to the Conduit, where I washt her polluted *lips* for her, and wrenched her leud Petticoats to some purpose, tumbling her under a Cock, and letting the water run, till she had not a dry thred about her, and had her soundly kickt to boot.

Give me leave to remember other my Cotemporaries very remarkable for their tricks, and my boon and pleasant companions, *Mul-Sack*, the *Chimney-Sweeper*, and *Cotting-*

of Mal Cutpurse. 83

Cottington the Cheat, who made up the Pack of our *English Gypsies*. Mul I think was Honest, but Cottington could cheat me, and I durst scarce venture my self in his company; for he pawn'd me once in a *Tavern* even to the shaming of me, though I think I was even with him at the long run: having light upon him drunk, and enticed him Home, I brought him to a Constable and charged him with him, who had him to a Justice, by whose Warrant he was set in the Stocks till he was sober. But he was grown confident in such wooden punishments, having stood in the Pillory at *Charing-Crosse* a little while before with a *Tinker*, whose Kettle he wore on his Head all the time: the *Tinker* was put in before him on his right Hand, which he *Spaniard-like* quarrelled at, saying, he was a person of more reputation then the *Tinker*, and made the Officers remove him

to

84 *The Life and Death*

to make place for his *worship*. I visited my Gentleman in his Yoke, but I could not tell whether his Face or his Kettle were the better Brass.

I shall often mention my Bull dogs though I had almost forgot this pleasant Story ; Among other of my Bull-dogs I kept, I had one whom I constantly fed my self, and by a *trick* I used (which was to offer him Meat in my left Hand, and if he snapt at it, to give him five or six Cuffs of the ear) I had learnt him to take no meat but out of my right Hand, which howsoever I stood, and whether he came to me behind or before at my feeding of him he exactly knew. There was a Wench a Servant to an Alehouse, I used to resort to, whom one time I overheard to call me *Mal' Cutpurse*, which I could by no means endure, and resolved to revenge with this device upon her. I came thither one morning with some Company, and as my
Custome

of Mal Cutpurse. 85

Custom was, I brought what cold Meat I had in the House for a *Break-fast* : we sate in the Kitchen and fell to, while the Maid was busie up and down, and my Dog lying in her way she took occasion to rate him and gave him a kick ; I laid hold on the opportunity which would otherwise have put me to a shift to make one, and askt her the reason of her so doing ; telling her withall that it may be she had a spight to the Dog for his good qualities ; Marry Gup quoth she, to be scabby is one of them ; yes said I, I will lay a Wager of ten shillings as much as your Quarters service comes to, the Dog shall discover whether you be a Maid or no ; agreed quoth the Wench, with that I stept to her and caught hold of her of her right Hand, as making sure the bargain, saying, Give him this bit of Meat that lyeth on my Trencher, and if he taketh it from you and eat it, you are a perfect Maid ; otherwise not :
she

86 *The Life and Death*

she was very unwilling to make an essay or refer her virginity or rather impudicity to the Dog, but in a careless manner held the Morfel to him in her left Hand, which he refused, but instantly took it out of my right Hand which was free; she was all abashed (for she had seen the Dog roving up and down the House and gnawing of Bones, and it could not be imputed to his repletion) and would fain have flunk away, but I forced her, holding her hand still, to stay and make another Tryal; the Dog continued in the same carelesse obstinacy which made the Wench stark mad: Well said I, before all the Company, it is apparent you have lost your Maidenhead, and if you will venture further, I'll tell you how often you have gone awry in your shoo; for here's twice already. Thereat she was so surprized, that she blushed exceedingly and had not the confidence to deny it, but sculkt out
of.

of Mal Cutpurse. 87

of the Kitchin and came in no more to us ; when her fellow-servant coming in we told her the Story, and would likewise wager with her upon the same bargain: the Gypsie either knew her self tardy or else was a wag ; for she merrily replied, Do you think me such a Fool to be tried by Dogs ? I was fully satisfied from the other for the affront she did me ; for she was forced to leave her place the boyes made such a Town Talk of her. Other the like pranks I plaid with this Dog which made me very careful of him, because he yielded me sport and pastime every way, so that I never suffered him to be abused at the Bull ; for I made nothing to crack any mans head with a good Battoon I had alwayes in my hand if they played foul play ; which gives me occasion to add (that I may not misse any of my good qualities) that I could use a Backsword as well as the best of them. Once I challenged
a fel-

88 *The Life and Death*

a fellow to fight with me in a School at that Weapon, whom I so soundly beat that he was forced to lay it down and confesse me the Conquerour.

I will tell you also of a drunken rencounter of mine as festiuous and unhappy as any of my other, and something of kin to this. I had been quaffing one night late at the *Devil Tavern*, and had got my Load with some of my acquaintance, who being loth to stir I slunk away from them, and making hast out of doors, in the Dark reeled or stumbled at a great black Sow that was rousting of a Dunghil neer the Kennel, where into I fell and most lamentably bemired my self with the dirt, and turning about to see who gave me this abuse, I perceived by its grunting 'twas a Swine; thought I to my self I can have no better satisfaction then by driving of it home, and the pounding of it, and so make the owner pay
for

of Mal Cutpurse. 89

For the Trespasse. I then fell a driving the Sow, for so she proved ; but I know not whether I reeled or she swallowed the mow ; for she was full of Pigs. This pleased me so much the better, and invited me to that entertainment of her beyond the impulses of my present humour ; I knockt at Door, and it being opened I put in my Lodger before me. My Maids began to scold and to tell me they had new washt the House, the bitter said I for my Guest ; you do not know my meaning, get you to your Distaffe and lend me a Candle. So I gently drove her up to my best Chamber, which was matted, and with a Mat made her a Bed ; and a little after made her a Drench to hasten her farrowing. It pleased the Dogs next morning she brought me Eleven curious sandy Coloured Pigs spotted like the *Gunny* ones, very fat and tydy to my no little rejoycement.

90 *The Life and Death*

I made a shift to eat them merrily inviting my Gossips and Compeers severally to them, till I had spent them all, and then I very fairly turned the Sow out of Doors, who presently repaired to her old Master a *Bumkin* that lived at *Islington*, who with wonderment received her again, and having given her some Grains turned her out of his Gates, watching what Course she would take, and intending to have satisfaction for his Pigs wheresoever he should find her to have laid them. The Sow naturally mindful of her squeaking brood, came directly to my Doors, and there kept a lamentable quarter to be admitted; this was Evidence enough for the Whorson that there his Sow had laid her Belly; when with a clear Confidence he knocks at my door and demands to speak with me: I wonder'd what rustic Visitant I had got, and suspected him come out of *Smithfield* from a
bad

of Mal Cutpurse. 91

bad Market, among my Harvesters there; but it proved quite another Story. He tells me a Tale of a Sow and her Litter: truly he is mad. He swears he knows his Sow meaning by her grunting, and that he would give me Sauce to my Pike if I made no better answer. Goodman Coxcumb said I, come in and see if this House look like a Hog-stie (which though I say it, was kept as neat and clean as any Lords in London, my Lord Mayor not excepted) He came through the Parlour into my Kitchen and Yard: do you think said I she is here? thence up Stairs into my Bed-chambers and Dining Room, where he saw his own face in the boards, do you think she Pig'd here? no quoth the Fellow.: lastly I carried him into my Matted Room, What think you of this? Oh no, quoth the Hogherd, I wonder you think me to have so little manners! yfaith said I, if she pig'd not here she pig'd no where in my

92 *The Life and Death*

my House you may believe me. The Fellow was Convinced, beyond my pardon, for this trouble, and went home cursing his Sow.

About this time happened that memorable Story of the five *Women-Shavers* in *Drury-lane*, which I was very glad to hear; for it was a most impudent debauched piece of malice and lessened the envy of my Actions; these five Furies had got a poor Woman, (whom they suspected the principal Shavers Husband had to do with) and having stript her, whipt her with rods most terribly, and shaved off all the Hair about her, and then souced her in suds till they had almost killed the poor Wretch, whose tears, cries and protestations prevailed not a rush. They were afterward prosecuted for the riot, and condemned to the Pillory, which one or two of them suffered, and the rest fled to *Barbadoes*; but all of them ruined their poor Husbands.

I was

of Mal Cutpurse. 93

I was now declining in my years, but my Trade as flourishing as ever, so that I lived in great plenty, and took the swing of my delights and pleasures, which way soever they invited me. I was always a good *Fellow*, and loved good *Liquor*, especially good *Wine*, and growing into years such *Cordials* were not amiss: once sitting chirping a Glasse or two in a Tavern at one of my Neighbours where I used to resort, (though the *Globe* was my principal Mansion, whence I issued out my Processes and Warrants to bring the Offenders and the Thieves before me and usually determined the wrong) my Company began to suspect, that the *Vintner* deceived us, and dasht our white Wine with Water: I had long before suspected him for the like sophistication, but he had alwayes stoutly denyed it, but this time I was resolved to make tryal; I went home and got some Green Seg, such as grows in
your

¶ The Life and Death

your clearest Fountains, and returned presently again, and calling for a fresh Quart, I put some of it into the Pot, and then called for the *Vintner*, who all agast and amazed at the surprizal, had not the Confidence utterly to deny it, but runs out and pretends to examine his Boy in the Kitchen, beyond which I had planted one of our Company to hear the Result, which was no more then this: the Master fell a beating the Vinegar-drawer or Pot-boy for not looking to the clearness of the water that was set aside for this use of mixture, which I hearing run in on the Gods speed, and to part the Pray fell with the like fury upon the Master, for his cheating couzening practices upon his Neighbours; and thence forward utterly forsook the Fellow and his Drink. This was a small and inconsiderate passage, but it serves to usher in a more famous and notable One, on this very Subject,

of Mal Cutpurse. 95

Subject, onely turned and altered
to the better.

After that unnatural and detestable Rebellion of the *Scots* in 1638; upon His Majesties return home to *London*, where preparation was made for his Magnificent Entry, I also resolved to show my Loyal and Dutiful Respects to the *King* in as ample manner as I could or might be permitted. 'Twas usual with the *Roman* and modernly the *Italian* Courtiers to be very splendid in publique Works, as erecting of Bridges or Aqueducts, Causewayes making of Moles, or cutting Passages; and this they doe either tributarily and by Order of the State, who set such an annual or other Rate upon them, or else Testamentarily, when at their Death they bequeath proportionable Sums of Money, which they have got by their unlawful Trade, to such good and laudable uses.

And memorable is that Story
of

96 *The Life and Death*

of *Phryne* the great Harlot of Greece (as you must know I am well read in all such kind of Learning) who when the Walls of *Thebes* lay demolished, she being a Citizen thereof, offered to build them up, and Rear them again, on Condition and Proviso, that on the Gates which were to be a Hundred, there should be engraven in Greek these words, *Alexander overthrew them, and Phryne the Courtesan rebuilt them*; which they disdainfully refusing, she to preserve the memory of her wealth (procured by the prostitution of her body) caused a Massie Image of *Venus* to be made all of Gold, which she Consecrated and gave to the Temple of *Apollo*, where it stood the wonder of succeeding Ages, till Sacrilege & Covetousness, & the raine and destruction of the place reduced it to one and the same Nothing.

But to return from this not unpleasant digression, I was resolved in my
own

of Mal Cutpurse. 97

own account to beare a part in the charge of this Solemnity ; and therefore undertook to supply Fleet-Street Conduit adjacent to my House with Wine, to run continually for that triumphal Day, which I performed with no less Expence then Credit and Delight, and the satisfaction of all Comers and Spectators. And as the King passed by me, I put out my Hand and caught Him by His, and grasped it very hard, saying, Welcome Home CHARLES ! His Majesty smiled, and I beleeve took me for some Mad Bold Beatrice or other, while the people shouted and made a noyse, in part at my Confidence and presumption, and in part for joy of the Kings Return. The rest of that Day I spent in jollity and carousing, and concluded the night with Fireworks and Drink.

This celebrated Action of mine it being the Town talk, made people
F look

98 *The Life and Death*

look upon me at another rate than formerly. 'Twas no more *Mal Content* but Mrs. *Mary Thrift*, my neighbours using me with new respect and civility. If I interposed in any Tumults, which happened frequently, and I would be sure to Concern my my self; if the Constable were called he followed alwayes my Direction; for I was lookt upon as the onely *Umpire* in such businessse! I had also a Custome which was duely observed to be charitable on *Sundays* to the Prisoners of *Ludgate* and *Newgate*, so that I grew well acquainted with the Keepers, and could Command any Favour from them that lay in their power, which most an end I used in procuring of Bayl and getting them accepted for Felons, and those of my Tribe and Family, though I was never nice or weary of doing the like Courtesies for poor Debtors when they made their Addresses to me.

Among

of Mal Cutpurse. 99

Among these Keepers I had Contracted a firm and close Friendship with *Ralph Briscoe* the Clerk of *Newgate*, a notable and famous Person, and the best and ablest to go through that place, they ever had or are like to have. He was right for my Tooth and made to my mind in every part of him; insomuch that had not the apathy and insensibleness of my carnal pleasure even to stupidity possesse me. I should have hired him to my Embraces. I had known him a Child, bred up most an end in the same Exercises of Bull-bayting, wherein I presided. I alwayes praised his towardliness and believed he would come to preferment; For he was bred at *Grays-Inne* which made him to write and read so perfectly in his youth, & I knew also he had good Parents; yet I know not that ever I mist him at any Match in my life: Besides, ever since he came to know himself, he alwayes deputed himself

100 *The Life and Death*

to me with abundance of regard, calling me his *Aunt*; keeping close by me and engaging with me in the Broyl. I once brought him off when his venturousnesse had like to have cost him his life, the Bull having made a heave at his breeches which broke and gave way, and me the opportunity of pulling him back. Ever after we two were both one, he never failing of any duty, nor any service I required of him, which he was capable to do in that place and quality.

Having such sure Cards at every Sessions, and having recovered and gained such an estimation, I did constantly interpose my self at all the Gaol Deliveries in and about *London*, and having gotten the ears and favour of some great Lords of the Court, by what artifices He tell you presently, I made it no difficulty to Reprieve any one Felon that could either make most Money for me, or
had

of Mal Cutpurse. 101

had deserved well, or was like by his dexterity to deserve well of me, so that in process of Time I had as many Tenants for Life belonging to me as any Nobleman whatsoever. These I had always ready at my Devotion, and the power and willingnesse I shewed to save some, brought ether Thieves to my obedience, so that I was as good as *Queen Regent of Misrule*, being obeyed from the two great Principles of Subjection, *Love* and *Fear*, being alike able to preserve from, and to deliver to the Gallows, upon any the least spleen or conceived displeasure: the load whereof some untractable Rogues felt in their deceived hopes of a *burnt Hand*, when (like the *Turkish Emperour* of late, who gave a private Sign for the cutting off a Malefactors Head for *Coyning* when the punishment of the Law was but the Losse of his Hand) I gave them over to themselves and the Law, and left

102 *The Life and Death*

their Heads in a Noose and their Lives in the Lurch.

But to abridge a while the thread of this Thievish Discourses, I will tell you some other of my Pranks and devices, which were far more innocent and civil, being a fair Negotiation betwixt Man and Man, upon honest and equitable grounds. I had made many Friends, and some of them monied Men, with whom (having quickly got an inside into the Scriveners way of lending other Folks money,) I did now and then pleasure a Friend; among other of the courtesies, when Money was very scarce for a Courtier to find in the City without very good security, (though they have had the luck to bite them of their wares and goods to the disparagement of *Inprimis* and *Items*) I did upon the earnest entreaty of one of those gay Cavelleiros endeavour to take up a 100 l. for him of one of my Dons, who was ve-

ry

of Mal Cutpurse. 103

ry rich; acquainting him with the quality and fortunes of my Brave, and that there could not possibly be any danger in crediting him with that summe; he smiled, and replied he knew the Gentleman very well, that his Uncle was yet living his very good Friend, and therefore should be loath to displease him, by supplying his Nephew in any extravagant courses; but yet if I thought there was no danger, or that the young man was civilized, he would venture such a summe if he would be bound. I undertook both these considerations, as sure of a good snip and share, when my youngster should have the Money, but the Old Rogue intended no such matter; for when my Friend came to receive the Money, he very punctually told it him out and suffered him to bag it up, when according to agreement he asked him to be Bound, with all my heart replied the other,

104 *The Life and Death*

when straight wayes rusheth in a couple of Fellowes with a double Cord, and make the Gallant fast to a great bed, and throwing him his Money at his Feet, leave him to consider of the disposal of it : in which consultation he was not long before he knocked very hard, desiring the Old Gentleman to come up and receive his Money again, but there was no body would hear, while he was even tyred with hooping and the impatience of his restraint ; at last up comes the Grave Seignior with his two security men, and release the Gentleman, making him count over the Mony again, & pay it in due form of Law, and with some hints to him of his Uncle, and his own ill Husbandry, gave him leave to depart.

Immediately he repayres to me and tells me his disgrace : I furthered his passion by being as mad at it as himself, but how to help it I knew not,

of Mal Cutpurse. 105

not ; yet see the Invention of disappointed and frustrated expectation. I presently mustered my Wits and set him upon this project ; go you, said I, to such another *Veiliago*, which I named to him, a great Friend and Familiar of the others, and tell him you come from me ; and if I see him before, which I afterwards did, I will tell him as much, that you want a 100 / upon your own bond, and if he shall scruple it, tell him you were bound to such a Man and you paid him very honestly at the day ; he knows your Family likewise, and no doubt the plot will take effect.

My advice was followed, the Usurer as I, supposed before, comes to be resolved of the other, whether what was told was true ? he answered, yes, I had him bound and he pay'd me very honestly ; whereupon the dotard no way doubting of just dealing, lent the 100 / upon his

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bond,

106 *The Life and Death*

bond, but to this day never saw a Farthing again; but came constantly to his dying day rayling at me, though to the same purpose as pissing at the Conduit. He was a kind of a turn'd out Lawyer, who having got his Estate by broyls, thought it requisite to spend the rest of his dayes in ease and plenty; I thought it contrariwise no way fit or just, that such Tormenters should have their *Quietus est* either in this Life or the next; for I alwaies hated cruelty and oppression, but of all people I affected not a Lawyer.

I had tasted of their covetousnesse and dilatorinesse so much, that I never advised any person upon any misusing whatsoever to have recourse to them for remedy or redresse. I knew their quirks and quilllets and how they could and did wrest the Law to any thing for their own advantage; and therefore I alwaies by my self or Friends composed all differences

of Mal Cutpurse. 107

ferencies that came to my cognizance. I was never better pleased with any thing justly done by them then I was with that story of Mr. Attorney Noy (which relating to my Trade, was of good use and direction to me in such like Causes) concerning the 200 l. left by two Cheaters in an Inn-keepers hand by them both, to be delivered to them both again; which the man forgetting, pay'd it to one of them, and the other brought his Action; when the Court and the Defendants Counsell were Non-plust, Noy strikes in, and being Feed, acquaints the Judge if the person would come and receive it, the 200 l. was ready, and since they could not help it would pay it twice: but the Cheater durst not venture upon that score, and so the Court was satisfied of the Trick. In like manner, a Countrey Dealer had lost a 100 l. with Cloak-bag and all upon the Road, it having dropt from

108 *The Life and Death*

from him, and a good honest poor man had the Fortune to find it at the Townes End. The looser cries it, offering to give Twenty pound to any that should informe him of it; the Countryman hearing of my practise, comes to me and acquaints me with it; I expecting a little consideration also, gave the man notice, who came and told out the Money, and when he had told it, threw the poor man Twenty Shillings, saying, that indeed there was neer 120 l. and that the founder had taken out the odd Money, and had more then satisfied himself; the Man denyed it, the other persisted in it, why then said I, there is no other way of decision but by your Oaths; and if either of you dare forswear himself for the Money, at his peril be it. The Covetous *Londoner* accepts of the condition, the other desires his Purgation; so they made two Affidavits the loser swears he lost 120 l. the other

of Mal Cutpurse. 109

ther swears there was all he ever found; so that upon reference of it to me, I ordered the Money to remaine still with the honest finder, it appearing by both their Oaths that this was not the Money that was lost, but another summe, and might possibly by a favourable construction be another mans.

THE *Seeds* of that Unnatural War, which not long after grew up to be the *Harvest* of Death in the numerous Slaughter of many Brave and Gallant Persons, some of them of my acquaintance, began now to appear, when the popular Artifices and Cheats of some Grandees of those Times upon the multitude, by their specious pretences of *Liberty* and *Religion*, so farre outdid all the wayes and methods of my Imps, and their most Jugling impostures, and Hocus Pocusses, that I was at a losse and had nothing at all to do:

The

110 *The Life and Death*

The publique was all the Noyse, and all the Trade and Resort was to Mr. Pym's Chamber; poor City Guls, that came thither to have their Pockets Pickt, and to learn how to throw away their Money.

This new Invention I say, very much troubled me, for, besides that I had a tincture of Religion and good Nature, both which made me affectionately Loyal to my Prince, whose Honour and Safety was principally endangered; I plainly perceived that there would be no living for me in those precise times that I boded would ensue; which would endure none but holy Cheats and sanctified Delusions, where another guesse spirit then of *Mephistophilus* was pretended in their Godly Legerdemain and most zealous operations.

But they soon resolved me, that it was indeed *Old Nick* who actuated them by his principles of Malice, Lying and Murther, (Vices and Impieties

of Mal Cutpurse. 111

eties I can proudly say, thanked be my good innocent Stars, I never was the least tainted with; (for if I had any thing of the Divil within me, I had of the *Merry* one, not having through all my Life done any harm to the Life or Limb of any Person) when I perceived them engaged in that desperate Fatal conspiracy against that renowned States-man, the Earl of *Strafford*, Lord Deputy of *Ireland*.

That bloody Prosecution, most implacable revenge, and impotent rage of the Rabble, did very much move alike my indignation and compassion, which I was not afraid for all the mad Prentices ran down almost every day crying, *Justice and Execution* (and a casting glancing blow at me might have been feared) publicly to resent and declare my abhorrence.

Nay to make that Unfortunate Earls Enemies appear equally Cruel
and

112 *The Life and Death*

and Ridiculous to that sort of people I conversed with; I published a solemne *Bull baiting*, where in the hearing of them all, I named a generous and cunning *Bull* that threw off all the Dogs that made at him, *Strafford*; and my Dogs that played at him, I named *Pym* and *St. John's* and so forth; This is *Pym* cryed I, he bawls and makes a noyse but bites not: but this is *St. John's*, he fastneth shrewdly, but yet he playes not any fair play, and so Allegorized the whole story.

There were some *Pbanaticks* there who caught hold of my words, and began to question me; but oh my sides! I cannot but laugh to think I see those *Rascalls* beaten. My *Crue* without any command of mine, fell upon them, calling them all the Saucy Rogues in the World, for daring to question me that was the uncontrollable Mistrresse of the Game, and at whose service they all were;
and.

of Mal Cutpurse. 113

and having kickt and banged them to some purpose, turned them out of the *Bear-Garden* to relate to their Complices how like a stage they had seen there to that at *Westminster-hall*, which they failed not to doe, with many Aggravations of my impudent (as they were pleased to call it) Behaviour and Language, to the Dishonour of the Parliament and those famous Patriots and Assertors of its Priviledges and the Liberty of the Subject, when I could have said more truth in behalf of my *Pick-pockets*.

The Blowes these Roundheaded sneak-noses had received, stuck so close to their skins, that they could not forget me the occasion thereof, which made them uncessantly diligent in procuring an order of Commitment of me to the Sergeant at Arms attending the House of Commons. I had timely notice hereof and prepared to avoid the Storm, by
running

114 *The Life and Death*

running for shelter under the protection of a Nobleman my Neighbour, who interposed his Power and Authority, and superseded the Warrant for seizing me.

I know people will be inquisitive from whence and upon what occasion came this kindnesse, and therefore I will passe from this Noble occurrence to another lepid and pleasant Story forbearing only the Name and Place, because its yet recent in Memory. You must know therefore that among other my large acquaintance I had some familiarity with the mad Girls and the venerable Matrons of the kind Motion, among the rest, I was very intimate with the Abbess of the *Holland Leagure* on the Eank side, and with *Damaris* Page, newly then from a *whore Rampant* separated to the Office of a Procurer or Provider, and some other notable and the ancientest Traders in that Profession. Now
seeing

of Mal Cutpurse. 115

seeing how little hopes there were of my interlooping in stolen Goods, I thought it the best Course to keep me in my old Age which grew apace upon me, to deal altogether in prohibited Wares, not doubting but that pleasure would invite as many Comers as Profit, there being alwayes, which I considered both in War and Peace, good Vent of such Commodities. The voluptuous Bed is never the lesse frequented for those hard and painful Lodgings in the Camp.

I saw also, that the former Traffiquers this way were very straight-laced and too narrow in their practise, as Confining their industry in this Negotiation to one Sex, like Women Taylors, that if they were to be hanged cannot make a Doublet for themselves. In this I was a little prosperous, though to make good the Simile, I could never fit my self. One time (you may spare me this digres-

116 *The Life and Death*

digression; for since there was nothing serious in the whole course of my life, save the very anticknesse thereof which alwayes kept the same tenour, it is no great matter how I place my words and matter) as I was going down Fleetbridge I espied one of my Neighbours Mr. Drake, a Taylor God bless him, and to my purpose, he was altogether for the women; quoth I in Droll, Mr. Drake when shall you and I make Ducklings? he quackt again, and told me, that I lookt as if some Toad had ridden me and poysoned me into that shape, that he was altogether for a dainty Duck, that I was not like that Feather, and that my Eggs were addle. I contented my self with the repulse and walkt quietly homeward.

To return, I had new and strange faces now frequenting and haunting my House quite contrary from those before; I began to think my self a *Generalissima* or some great Military Officer,

of Mal Cutpurse. 117

Officer, such a Troop of Gallants and Souldier-like Men using to me for employment and preferment; Among the rest I was cruelly troubled with *Frenchmen*, who were very sollicitous with me for Orders, with such confidence that I could not any way be rid of them; one of them whom I ventured upon a finical Madam, I saw afterwards in a splendid Condition, and generally all whom I set at work were ever afterwards very seldome idle or needed my assistance. I never well knew the knack of it (for they were very sordid and ingrateful, and courted not (when they were served) my acquaintance that advanced them) but if I did I should modestly forbear it; for I love it not my self; and therefore will restrain others so, through their forced ignorance thereof. But without great wrong to Civility it is imputable chiefly to the Mignardises, and more Effeminate

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118 *The Life and Death*

Wantonnesse of the *Monsieur*; whose soft dalliances and Courtships, and impudent bold Flatteries are in that preferable, before the rude and downright attempts of the *English*; and I remember a leud story of *Vavasour Powell*, inyeighing in his Pulpit against the *Cavaliers*, and taxing the violence of their lust to this very purpose; but it is well known, and his Authority not worth a rush; and so I passe it least I foul my Paper.

Generally, I therefore chose the sprucest Fellows the Town afforded, for they did me reputation at home and service abroad; my Neighbours admiring what this retinue and attendance meant, nor would I now discover it but to unburden my conscience, and shame the private practices of some great Women; who to this very purpose keep Embassaries and Agents to procure Stallions to satiate their desires, as confidently as they

of Mal Cutpurse. 119

they entertain Grooms and Laundries. I will stirre this Puddle no longer, nor dive into the depth of it any further, least I pollute and inquinate the Reader with the Filth hereof.

This was Fortunes right hand to me in this new undertaking, by which I got good store of Money, being pay'd on both sides: I had also a bountifull one of her left, in my trucking with the other Sex: I told you my acquaintance there, [among whom I ought to have reckoned Mrs. Pike, one of Mrs. Turners breeding up, and of the like fate with her, for they were both hanged at Tyburne: the latter for dealing unskillfully in my Vocation, having received stolen goods from the hands of one Crowder (a notable High Way Man who used to Rob people in the Habit of a Bishop, attended by Four or Five in the quality of his Servants, and was very famous for the great prizes he

120 *The Life and Death*

he took) I did much regret the fortune of both these, having paralleled and compared them with my Condition, which as to the future resembled Mrs. Turners, whose unhappineffe it was to have to do with great Personages; my present way, and as to my past Life, was neer a piece with Mrs. Pikes as I was Receiver Generall of the Thieves Revenue. I did all I could to save her, but the Notoriety of her Crime prevayled against all endeavours that way; and so I resigned her to her cruel destiny.] Now I will tell you what good use I made of it; I had my Purveyors continually abroad, who had alwaies the prime of the Market: whatever Maidens came to Town, there was none durst or might see them till my turn was served, my Sisters of the Tribe must wait for my leavings; very frequently I have had notice of some, even from those persons and places that *retailed* them-
them-

of Mal Cutpurse. 121

themselves, it being counted a particular fault to conceal any such thing from me, and which they were sure to satisfie me for by one revenge or another, which the proudest she of them all durst never think to retaliate upon me.

This was the Common road, but these were other private ways, which were chalkt out to me by the particular Fancy of some great persons, whose eyes had lighted upon some difficult love, which lay not in their Knight Errantry to atchieve. Herein my service was Courted, who by reason of my general knowledge and the Confidence of addresse had access every where. I sometimes on such Errands delivered Letters, sometimes a Complement and a how do' ye and the proxy of a visit, when I would be sure to have the servants at my devotion: In these Affairs as in all other I was no less dexterous then lucky, which made me very ac-

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cepta-

122 *The Life and Death*

ceptable to those who stood in need of such an Instrument.

So that my House was become a Double Temple of *Priapus* and *Venus*, frequented by Votaries of both sorts, to whose desires my answers (the Oracles of a Couch chair where I sat as chief Priestesse) were always favourably accommodated; some of my Proselytes, for their good omen of their initiation by my predisposal of them (but to their thinking occasionally) rencountering one another at my threshold, to the ravishing wonder of those mutual desirers, who little expected such sudden Fruition, which alwayes enhanced my price to the defraying of my liberal Expences in wine and good Cheer.

With others I lingred, delaying their Impatience by laying before them the difficult but certain attainment of their wishes, which served as a Spur to the dulnesse of their Purses; for my Lady *Pecunia* and I kept

of Mal Cutpurse. 123

kept the same pace; but still in the Conclusion I did the Feat. There was a noted Lasse a married Wife of this time, whose Story shall serve to conclude all the amorous tricks and pranks that were wrought by me; for indeed it sums up all that belongs or attends to such doings, and the account I promised; want and shame never failing to bring up the rear of Lust and wantonness.

She was in her youth a very curious Piece indeed, but wanting a Fortune Competent and proportionable to it, arrived no higher at her Marriage than an ordinary Citizen, yet of good Fame and Reputation. For a while in the beginning of this state she lived contently at home, but the Flies buzzing about her as they resort alwayes to sweets, soon Corrupted and Tainted her: this was not unknown to me, and thereupon I resolved that she was as free for my turn as for any bodies, and forth-

124 *The Life and Death*

with I accosted her, using such Carresses, promises and invitations as I knew the Market would bear, so that I made her entirely mine, and gratified a friend with her first acquaintance, who in short, was that Noble Friend, that preserved me out of the hands of the People at *Westminster* who had resolved on my mind: He had not long after occasion to Leave *London*, and then I bestowed her on another, and so to a Third, Fourth and Fifth, &c. according to my best advantage, till such time she had Contracted those distempers, which not long after brought her to her Grave; her sickness having first buried those quick and lively Colours in her Face under the cold Earth of a dead and lurid paleness, that enviously triumpht in the spoils of so proud a Beauty. Being in this plight, and judging her self both by the glasse of her face and that unerring mirrour of her Conscience unworthy

of Mal Cutpurse. 125

worthy to live, since the first told her she could be in no *favour* with Men, and the other more surely told her, she was out of *favour* with Heaven, she addrest her to Late but serious Repentance, beginning at the right place with Confession, unbo-
soming her self to her Husband, and craving first his pardon and forgive-
nesse; which being granted, she de-
sires him to call up all her Children,
which were in number Twelve, that
she might take her leave of them, and
say something of them to him which
concerned him.

When they were come, she begins,
This Eldest Boy is truly yours, no
Man ever having to doe with me un-
till after his Birth; but this next to
him is such a Knights Son, that such
a merchants that such a Noble mans,
that such a Doctors, and so forward
(naming men all of good quality &
Estate) till she came to the youn-
gest, who was carelesly biting on a
G 3 piece

126 *The Life and Death*

piece of Bread and Butter, when just as she was pronouncing his Parentage, the Boy broke out into this Language; hold Mother, pray be-think your Self; for Gods sake let me have a Father that's Rich and Gentile, as well as the rest of my Brothers and Sisters: which proving to his wish, the Boy was over-joyed; but the poor Cuckold dismay'd; till after her Dcease, (for I durst not come neer her, as well loath to give her any occasion of regret and im-bitter her sad Condition as indeed ashamed of my selfe, being toucht with the like, though not so through Convictions of the evil I had done) coming to condole with him for the losse of my Gossip: he roundly taxed me with inveagling his Wife into such lewd Courtes, to his no lesse shame then Ruine, by such a numerous Train of *Bastards*. I bid him be quiet, and if he would follow my advice I would make him a gainer by
his

of Mal Cutpurse. 127

his hard Fortunes; which I effected by procuring him round summs of Money from his respective Rivals, to the maintenance of their Illigitimate Issue, which they honestly paid; and all was husht up in a contented secrecy, and he and I as good Friends and Companions as ever.

The *sweets* of this sinne are not so *luscious*, but the *sewre* of it is altogether as *tart* and *piercing*; and usually those pricks are applyed to the Conscience, when there is no outward comfort left to intervene and rebate their Keennesse, when Pleasures, Friends and Health have forsaken them, and exposed them in the Loathsome dresse of their own impurities, to the contempt of the world, and the abhorrence of themselves.

For I do not know of those many I was acquainted with, that ever parted hence as others do: but either they died the pity and scorn of

128 *The Life and Death*

people, or else they ranted away their lives in a desperate and carelesse manner, to no lesse scandal and ignominy, then if they had perished through want and distresse. I speak of Common and Continuall Strumpets, who live by the Devils pay, and are constantly in his Service; Yet is death in what shape soever a Felicity, if it comes seasonably, and nicks them in the very critical time of their decay; but if they chance to survive that, who can reckon those numberlesse miseries that attend them? what old sinner is she who thinks not of Calamitous *Shrove Tuesday*, with Dread and Horrour? who skips not out of her Bed if she have any, or else off a Dresser every night with Fear and Affrightment at the Apparition of a Beadle at a Whipping Post or Carts Tayle? who Dreams not of that Terrible Tempest of *Turnip Tops*, *Garbage*, *Dirt*, and *Brick-bracks*, and
of

of Mal Cutpurse. 126

of a *Hog* in Armour to ride through it? who trembles not at those dire Execrations, and Curses of the Prentices, during that Martyrdome? Damning all Bauds to Hell, and the Sharpest inflictions of punishment there, yet the very day before smiling in her Face, calling her Mother, Aunt &c. and sending for *Mul-Sack*, or *Strong-waters*, to assist them in the prosecution of their Lusts, and to deal Honestly and civilly with them. Oh this Contradiction and Unagreeableness between Twenty and Forty years! the longest distance betwixt the temperate and horrid Zone of Woman-hood; In which last Climes, what Fætid Exhalations, what Putrid Breaths, what Parched Skins, what Withered and Dried Faces are there? As for those real Fires hereafter, the terreur of that were insupportable; but that they have a device to quench those Flames by continual pouring in

130 *The Life and Death*

strong liquor, which swimmers their brain into a *Lethe* of all future misery.

But I love not to dwell long on this subject, having other passages of my Life (which were down-right honest) to r'account, that so my Reputation may be like my Habit and Mind, equally Good and Evil; a kind of indifference or neutrality, as to generals of either, but in particulars especially as to the Times I am now speaking of, I think I was the onely declared person in our street against the Parliament; For I well remember when the King came to *Branford*, and the City was in a great Fright by his neer advance, (which I wished were to my Doors, where I would have made his Majesty a great deal welcomer then at his return from the North) The whole force of Trained Bands and Auxiliaries marched out to oppose him, and Carts came door by door for Victu-

of Mal Cutpurse. 131

Viſuals to follow them to their Camp, which was thrown into baſkets, which I having warning of, prepared two Ox Livers, which I juſt Perboyled, and wrapping it up with broken Brick-bats for Bread, threw into the Basket : it fell very heavy and plumpin, which made the *Vi-rage* that was ſet in the Cart to ſlow the Guttage, a zealous voluntary Wench, of which there were numbers, to intend an inquiry ; but there were ſo many Diſloyal Hands heaving in Provant, that ſhe had not the preſent opportunity : but he whom I ſent to Dog the Cart, for the pleaſure of the diſcovery was all ; told me, that about the Church ſhe unpin'd the Clout, and ſpying the Dainties, fell a rawing as if ſhe had been inſpired by *Hugh Peters* ; wiſhing ſhe knew the Cavalier Dog that did it ; but I valued not ſuch unſkilful Conjurers, giving the Rebels Muſkiditchee with my Curriſh Fair.

Of

132 *The Life and Death*

Of all the Zani's and Jack Puddings of this sad Reformation: I never abhorred any man more then that *Hugh Peters* and *William Lilly*, the very disgrace of our Art and Profession; who with their lying wonders and juggling deccits, and impudent falsehoods, did very much prejudice the King's Cause. I wonder'd to see fellowes so expert in the Mystery, of whom I never had any intelligence before I see them at work; and therefore no doubt they were of Old Nicks own planting, who fitted them to that work in an instant, to which my Imps rose by degrees.

These Forrainers and Interlopers had all the Trade, while the Natives, those *Burgeses* of *Turnmill-street* had nothing to do: unlesse they would learn their hands to Fight in a fair Field, or against Walls and Bull-works (to which they were highly urged, by their necessity; for as to the
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of Mal Cutpurie. 133

vehement preachments that way, they had the grace and happinesse never to come within a Church, which is one of their principles) instead of cutting a Purse in a Crowd.

The Money was all got into *Guild-Hall London*, and a pickaron might have sooner rob'd a Wench of her Maiden Head, then of her Bodkin and Thimble; for there were some hopes she might happily have preserved that, but the other were gone without Redemption.

Many an antoward look I gave to that *Corban*, that Treasury and Exchequer of the Cause, about which I would willingly have employed some of my *Janizaries*; but there were so many Thieves hankering over it, for the whole was but a great Robbery, that my puny ones could not tell where to creep in. And oh how I laught, when I heard the Folks parted with their Gold and Silver, upon the warrant of the
publique

134 *The Life and Death*

Publique Faith; to which my Trade was an *Amsterdam* Bank, and a safe sanctuary. Some jeered at the term and said it was the Punick Faith, infamous for all manner of Treachery and Perfidiousnesse; others that it was the Publike prostituted Faith, all, that the Publique was Mad; and would need double the sums to recover it. I lived to see all of it verified, when it became a by Word and a term of Art, used by my *Mercurialls*, when they would signifie the unlikely-hood of restoring their purchases.

Now they began to raise and List their *Militia*, and the division and ward of *Fleet-street*, making one entire Regiment; because of the vicinity and nearnesse to their Generals, the Earl of *Essex* his house; they were graced with his Colours, which were *Orange* or *Tawney*: whereupon I fell upon my former imitation, and instead of *White*,
Green,

of Mal Cutpurse. 135

Green, Red, and Blew Colours used to be put into my Doggs Heads, at Matches for distinction; I set on *O-range* and *White*; and with the usual stile given that Earle by the Cavaliers, I called the *Bull* his *Oxe*llency. This apposite pat words and whimsies could not escape notice, though they escaped punishment; my Neighbours hearing of the danger and interceeding for me as one of cracket reason and judgement.

One time as they were drawing up in *Fleet-street*, on a Generall Training-day, I could not forbear upbraiding them with their Fighting against the King; whereat one of the Officers a great Zealot, gave me a wrap on my back with a little Cain he had in his Hand; Sirrah said I, Ple make you repent this blow you gave me; tis not your *Turd Coloured Scarf* shall excuse you. The fellow was very wroth, and cryed out to seize me, and have me before

136 *The Life and Death*

before his Colonel ; but I withdrew through the presse, and got to my House, meditating on revenge for this affront.

Now the Women and Maids of every Parishes, with Drums, Mattocks, Shovels and Baskets, went Rank and File to cast up the line, and make the Fortifications round the City ; I was invited to be one of the number, and for Honours sake should carry a Flag, as was then used, in the Head of a Company ; as the custome is with the Fencers when they play their Prizes. I refused the motion, returning to them that Dichery, tuned to the beat of the Drum on those Occasions — Round-Heads and Cuckolds go Dig, go Dig — your Wives Aprons, grow short and their bellies big ; and that they need not send their Wives to make works, for they could make Horn-works enough at home ; where the Embraces of their Gallants would

of Mal Cutpurse. 137

would serve for a better *line* of communication, without the help or direction of Captain *Bulmer*, or rather *Bull-maker*, the principal Engineer of the Parliament.

But I mingled my self among those Honest Matrons, that went down and Petitioned at *Westminster* for Peace, when we were bade to go home and to wash our Dishes; which answer so moved my patience, that I could not forbear to cry out aloud. Rather wash you your Mouths from such foul Language, and your hands from that blood is which already shed; which begat such a fuming in their Guards, who were commanded to fall on and drive us away, that some of the company for hast lost their Hats and Petticoats, beyond my Art of retrieving and recovering them; for I had no acquaintance, nor would I hold any correspondence with those Modern Thieves, who plundered every day one honest

138 *The Life and Death*

honest man or other without any controul.

I never thereafter could abide the Earl of *Essex*, for that he, that was no Womans Man, and therefore very obnoxious to me, yet could adulterate the affections of the Kings Subjects; and out of a sort of revenge for the disgrace he received in being repudiated by his Wife, did divorce them from their Allegiance to their Prince, who had no way merited at his hands any such demeanour, which made me resolve never to Contribute a Farthing or pay any of the *Assessments* for the maintenance of the War, but what was levyed by distresse or composition made by my Neighbours, who preserved me from the violence of those miserable Times. I had a Finger likewise in the Commission of Array; that was set on foot in *London*, and had it proceeded, could have brought a hundred of

of Mal Cutpurse. 139

as stout fel'owes to assist the Enterprize, as any were in the City ; being my Companions at Bull-baiting who were ready to serve me or my designs in any thing.

But all things coming to confusion by the carrying on the Rebellion ; I betook my self to a Contemplative Life, and retired my self at home despayring to see good day again : lamenting the sad and miserable distractions into which we were reduced. Let no person think I had no sence thereof, for though I say it my self, I had as much English Nature in me as any body , and suffered as much in my way as any one whatsoever. But that which more nearly grieved me, was the absence and losse also of many of my great Friends, who were of the other side. In this solitary Condition, to alleviate and lighten the tediousness thereof ; I played with these my several sorts of Creatures of pleasure
and

140 *The Life and Death*

and imitation ; such as my Baboons Apes, Squirrels, and Parrots, with them, and the Recreation of their Tricks to passe away the time, and supply the defect of better Converse.

I likewise got me three Maids, intending now at last to play the good House-wife, whom I set to Card, Reel and Spin, and other such Domestick imployment ; keeping them to their Task, and overseeing their work, and hearing them sing which I much delighted in : though my voice was the untuneablest thing that ever was heard, and as gratefull to the Ears of people, as the squeeks of a Mandrake at it's Revulsiion ; with these Creatures and Wenches, and a Strange Cat I had which would follow me into the Streets , I passed the day, but the nights were long and irksome : whereupon I set my rooms out to Lodgers, such as I liked, and well understood. Among the rest
of

of Mal Cutpurse. 141

of those that came to enquire for a Chamber of me, there came one bonny blade whom I well knew by his Name to be a Gentleman, and ask me the question, I told him I was well contented, but my price was Seven Shillings a Week; contented quoth he, I like my Lodging and my Land-lady so well, that I value not the Rent; Sir quoth I, I have another Article then to make with you, that you keep good hours (which I very constantly observed) for I shut my doors presently after Nine a Clock at Night; saith he, I shall do well enough for that, you may shut your doors as you please; but where I use to lie, I never trouble the Doors, for I alwaies come in at the Windowes, or through the Wall, or down into the Cellar.

I lookt upon the Gentleman very seriously, wondering how any of my Tribe, as I had cause to conceive of him by his discourse, durst use that bold-

142 *The Life and Death*

boldnesse and quicknesse with me ; but recollecting my self, I thought he might be a merry wag and ingenious, and therefore resolved to try him ; he proved to be a person of good Worth and Estate, and of very great Civility : to whose courteous Friendship and good Company, I was for a long time after much beholden.

In this privacy I lived till the then War expired, whose event mightily discontented me : but was however a little Comforted at the sight and enjoyment of my Friend, the Old Cavy's, who survived those Extremities meerly to be engaged in new ones ; particularly that Noble Lord my Neighbour returned to his house, whose very sight did much solace me. His pleasures and my other Friends businesses invited me again into the publique. I undertook their Compositions, and frequented their Committees of Sequestration

at

of Mal Cutpurse. 143

Haberdashers-Hall and *Goldsmiths-Hall*, untill the *Hobgoblin Tyrants* routed me away, charging their *Ushers* to keep me out; and to terrifie me the more, to Shoot me if I presumed to Enter.

About this time, one *Walker* a notable *Pick-pocket*, had got a rich Gold Watch set with Diamonds from my Lady *Fairfax*, the Generals Wife; the manner thus. My Lady used to go a Lecture on a week day to *Ludgate Church*, called *St. Martins*, where one Mr. *Jacomy* Preached, being much followed by the *precisians*; *Walker* perceiving this, and that she constantly wore her Watch hanging by a Chain from her middle; against the next time she camethither, he dress himself like a Commander in the Army, and having his Comrades attending him like Troopers, one of them takes off a Pin of a Coach Wheel that was going downwards through the Gate,
by

144 *The Life and Death*

by which means the passage was obstructed, so that my Lady could not alight at the Church door, but was forced to leave her Coach without; which *Walker* taking occasion of, readily presented him self to her; and taking her from her Gentleman Usher, who attended her alighting, led her by the Arm into the Church, and by the way with a pair of Keen Scissors for the purpose, cut the Chain in two, and got the Watch clear away: she not missing it till Sermon was done when she was going to see the time of the day. Presently I was sent to, and any thing I would ask offered me, if I would discover or recover the Watch. I never had any intention to do her that Courtesie for her Husbands Sake; but indeed then could not tell. For the Fellow and his Complices suspecting a strict Search, were presently fled, and I could not tell whither; at last *Walker* was taken
for

of Mal Cutpurse. 145

for another Fact, in the same manner and Condemned; when to save his Neck, he presently sent to me, knowing he might safely trust me with a thing of that value, of Two Hundred Pounds; and desired me to go my Lady and offer her the Watch if she would get him a Reprieve, and some other small consideration. I effected my Reprieve, but he failed of continuing it; for he was the Brime of the Profession, the Master of them all; and therefore the Court would no means spare him but the next Sessions delivered him to Gregory: who shewed him a flight worth Twenty of his, and sent him swinging into the other world.

There were then the rarest pack of them, some whereof I left, who would lay a wager to pick a Mans Pocket, though he was warned of it but a Minute before, and knew his Company. It will be tedious to recite their

146 *The Life and Death*

Activities, how they jostled Mens Hands out of their Pockets that were set there purposely as a Guard or Sentinel to secure their Money ; how they would pretend to have a Letter read to them, or such like story, while standing behind you, they would Rub the Bung. The many Various neat Tricks they have played upon *Ludgate-Hill*, by making stops of Coaches and Carts ; the Money that hath been lost, there being more then sufficient to build up the Houses, and make the way broader without the Aid of an Act of Parliament, which would be highly prejudicial to the Trade. Again, if at any time a Diver was taken in the Fact, and his hand seized ; then they had Two or Three in readinesse to Discountenance the Complainer, and to give out that he looks more like a Pick-pocket then their fellow Rogue ; and so making a quarrell the Whipster Escapes.

There

of Mal Cutpurse. 147

There was a device used to catch some of those *Ingeniosi* at the sport, and to that purpose Men have had Fishing Hooks sowed in their Pockets, and some Gudgeons that ventured too deep and plunged into the bottom, have been caught and held fast: and angled up and down for five or six turns in a walk such as the great Hall at *Westminster*, with smart and cutting pains; but the smitten Fish will beware, to prevent that mischief they went afterwards more deliberately to work, and if they suspected any such story, would make nothing to cut away the whole side of the Breeches with the Pockets in it; as many have been served in Play-Houses and great Crouds, and concourses of People.

Other times when they had not the opportune and full liberty of their Hands below, they would use them above board in the like presse of the multitude; if they see any

148 *The Life and Death*

Man have a good Beaver, or Silver or Gold Hatband, they would so nimbly and slightly change it, and clapon one of their Musty Felts in the room of it, that the loser could not discern the Conveyance of it; all these tricks brought Grist to my Mill, but not in the same abundance as formerly; for I did not solely and altogether intend that my former way of dealing, because I was pretty forward in the world, and was a little more serious.

About this time also a great Crony of mine, one *Cbeney* a famous Wrastler (for the *North*, though I was for the *West*) which sport I mainly loved: was taken by the Troopers upon the High Way, who had allowance by the State for that very service. He defended himself stoutly, but was over-powred and desperately wounded, and brought to *Newgate*. He would faine have avoided his Tryal by my Counsel of pleading

of Mal Cutpurse. 149

pleading his weaknesse and the forenesse of his wounds, but that would not passe ; They caused him to be brought down in a Chaire, from which they drew him to a Cart, out of which he was cured of all his Diseases. I offered Fifty Pounds for his pardon because he was a stout fellow, and my old acquaintance ; but the Roads were so pestered with frequent Robberies, that I received a rebuke for my pains, and he a worse check for his.

For Colonell Downes's Men, (so they called themselves) were abroad, who suffered no passengers to Travel their wayes ; among whom there was one Horne a Captain, and a sturdy Pewterer, and some other Tradesmen whom I very well knew ; but with the Pewterer I had good Correspondence, some of those Monies came to my hands, which I faithfully kept and delivered at their demand to supply their necessities

150 *The Life and Death*

and occasions of the Prison, where they lay some while before Judgement. They died bravely and gallantly, giving me good cause to speak well of them: for I had some Money of their's in my hand, which by their silence and undisposall thereof, I reckoned my own, this was a good Wind-fall from *Gegories Plum-tree*; and I was so wise as not to speak a word of it to the Sheriffe or any of his Officers.

But my constant intimacy was with *Captaine Hind*, a daring adventurer (whose exploits are many of them publique) yet considering all, there was no such hazard in his pranks, for most of the chief of them I set; both of us concurring to be revenged of Committee Men and Parliament People, by those private assaults, since publique combating of them would not prevaile. The first designe was upon some of their Money that was going to pay their Souldiers

of Mal Cutpurse. 151

Souldiers at *Oxford* and *Gloucester*; had employed my Scouts about the Treasury in *Guild-Hall*, who informed me of it, and I gave as speedy notice to *Hind*; withal acquainting him that the Money which was Two Thousand Pounds, was Guarded with a Convoy of Twenty Horse, and therefore to provide accordingly. This was a dangerous Attempt but the love of Money and the pleasure of the spight, excited him to the exploit. He gathers some Twelve of his confident associates and withal resolved Men, and way layes the Cash a little of this side *Oxford*; when just at the close of the day, as the Wagon was past *Wheatley*, and at the Foot of *Shotover Hill*; he and his fellows rose from Ambuscado in the Twylight, and furiously fell upon the Troopers; who suspecting his number to be far greater then it was, fled away in confusion: while some of them followed

152 *The Life and Death*

the pursuit, and kept them from rallying or discovery what they were: while the other fell to ransack the Waggon, and remove the Goods that they might come to the Ferkion where the Money as I advised them was put up.

The Passengers were all in a heavy Fright fearing at the least the losse of all they had; but they rid and freed them of that perplexity and doubt, by telling them they came not to take away any Money, but what did as justly belong to them, as the persons that pretended to it; it being the Commonwealths Money which those great Thieves at *Westminster* had Fleeced out of the Publique to pay ther *Janizaries*, who maintained them in their Tyranny and Usurpation: while the Loyal and the Honest Subject was Ruined and Undone by their Taxes, Plunderies, twentieth part, and Sequestrations of their Estates.

Every

of Mal Cutpurse. 153

Every one of them took his part of the Money; and having gratified the Waggoner with half a piece, made post hast to *Bedford*, and so came by the tother end of the Town to *London*; where he acquainted me with the successe of the businesse, and requited my discovery with some of the half Crowns designed for *Red Coats*, who were ready to Mutiny for want of their pay: and I overjoyed with the *booby* & the *vexatious* mischief it did to my *Round headed Masters*.

Many such like Feats was done by him, as the robbing the Committee man, &c. But I will not trouble my Reader with what hath been related before as it came in and agreed with his own stories; though I was the Wyer that moved that Engine in all his great prizes, as most of his were such; leaving him in his injurious Grave into which he fell a sacrifice to their revenge and spleen, more then to the Lawes or any bodies

154 *The Life and Death*

complaint : being betrayed by a Minister sent to prepare him, but indeed to dispatch him.

BUT out of his *Askes*, as suddenly after his death arose as great a *Taker* as himself, one that stole as much Money as all the Thievs in *England* for his time ; my singular Good Friend *Richard Hannam*, a Fellow that went alwaies habited like, and was reputed, a Merchant. He constantly wore a Watch-Makers and Jewellers Shop in his Pocket, and could at any time command a Thousand Pounds. I put him upon the like employment of seizing Parliament Money on the General Receivers hard at *Reding* ; having notice by my Spies that a Thousand Pounds was ready there, expecting an Ammunition Wayn and Convoy to carry it to *London* ; but *Hannam* prevented that way of carriage, conveying it up himself on Horseback, having in the night time with
his

of Mal Cutpurse. 155

his followers brought a Ladder into the Orchard the back way, and set it up just against the Closet Window, in the furthestmost part of the House, and took away all the Money in bags, leaving some Thirty Pounds or thereabouts in odd and broken Groats and odd Money upon the Table; and leaving the Ladder standing against the Window where they entred, made hast through the Orchard to the Gravell pit where their Horses stood, and mounting them Rode speed for London: The notoriety of this Fact was so great, that by strict enquiry it was found that my Friend *Richard* was the principal Verb; wherenpon he was way-layd and apprehended, and sent down Prisoner to *Reding*, and from thence at the Assizes carried to *Abington*; whither I procured *Ralph Briscoe* to go down and assist him in what he could; so he packt such a Jury by jugling with the Bailiffs that

156 *The Life and Death*

that empanelled it ; that though Judge *Fermyn* did what he could to Hang him, there being very good circumstantial proof, as that he was seen in the Town that very night ; yet *Richard* so baulked and terrified the simple Jurors, and so affronted the Judge (by bidding him come off the Bench and Swear what he said as Judge, as a Witnesse &c. so he might perhaps Murder him by presumptions of Evidence as he termed it) that the Fellowes brought him in Guiltlesse ; though to procure his liberty of the Collector, he confessed he had the Money, but then there was no trying of him again for the same Fact. This was a cleaver come off, thank honest *Ralph* ; the Collector saved himself by discovering the Thieves, and they saved themselves from Imprisonment by discovering their Theft ; the honest Collector according to his word procuring their Release.

Many

of Mal Cutpurse. 157

Many other pranks he did which I was acquainted with, but that Forraigne Robbery of the King of his Plate at *Colen*, which I understood the Villain was in then, so alienated me from him, that I could never after endure the sight of him; but was very glad when not long after for all his promises of giving *Cromwell* some of his *Majesties* Papers which he had taken away at the same time, that discovered the Kings correspondents here, he was taken and Hanged in *Smithfield* Rounds, having a little before broke out of *Newgate* *Jayle* by the consent of a Convict person, who suffered him to Escape, for which the Foolish Fellow was presently Hanged himself. This *Hannam* was yet fond of me to the last, and I Fingered some Legacy Goods, a Watch and a Ring of his which he sent me from *Newgate*.

But to a more Jocular story: I should have told you that there was
one

158 *The Life and Death*

one *Rainbeard* a Grocer at Strand-
 bridge and I, who took much plea-
 sure in telling of any silly people we
 met with, that we were their God-
 father and Godmother; and to that
 purpose if either of us had hit upon
 a Chouse, whom we had perswaded
 into that belief, we sent him to one
 another. He had pickt up a *Ceter-
 monger* an *Irish Man*, older then him-
 self, of whom, having sight out his
 Parents Name, and the place of
 his Nativity, he had so deceived him
 as to make him believe him to be
 his Godfather; he pretending great
 kindneses to his Deceased Friends,
 and how dearly they Loved one a-
 nother, insomuch that the Fellow
 was wrought upon to kneel down
 and ask him Blessing: and received
 in Lieu thereof a Brasse half Crown
 but not discernable, and withal a
 direction to go to me at my House
 and do his duty there too, for I was
 his Godmother; with a Hundred
 flams

of Mal Cutpurse. 159

flams what we two would do for him by preferring him to the Court.

The Fellow glad of his good Fortune delayed not coming to me ; but when I considered him, and understood his businesse, I could not forbear Laughing ; but yet representing the sudden violence thereof as well as I could, I bid him do his duty : 'twas just at my door, and some of the Tankard-bearers perceiving the accost, and knowing my Tricks, fell into such a Hooting at the poor Fellow, jeering him with his Folly and most Grosse ignorance, that the Fellow sensible of it, went with his basket of Pipins into the street against my Windows, and discharged a whole shower of them upon the Glasse, (enough to have made me a Pye) before I could get up : when to give his anger freer passage, I threw off all the Casements which were to every Ly-band , and admitted his kindnesse, while the profusenesse
of

160 *The Life and Death*

of it recalled my Godsons Fury, and set him to vent it another way in Cursing and Swearing.

I had not yet weakt my spleen upon the Parliament who by undoing my Friends had undone me, being compelled by my good Nature to relieve and lend them Money in their Extremities. What mischief I had done them hitherto, was but a Flea-biting, and shewed only the impotence of my hatred; now it was my good Fortune to light upon a Fellow that could make them feel their Losses, and fret at the audaciousness of the Exploit, and yet have no remedy for it neither; with him I communicated my thoughts, and we concurred to Forge and Counterfeite their Commissioners and Treasurers Hands to the respective Receivers and Collectors, to pay the Summs of Money they had in their Hands without further delay, to such as he in his Counterfeits appointed;

fo

so that whereſoever we had intelligence of any round Summe in the Countrey, we were ſure to foreſtall the Market. This Cheat laſted for half a Year, till it was found out at Guild-hall, and ſuch a Politique counſe taken that no Warrants would paſſe among themſelves to avoid Cozenage.

When the Government was ſeized and uſurped by *Oliver*, we began this Trade a freſh, it being very facile to imitate his ſingle ſigne Mannall, as that ambitious Uſurper would have it ſtiled. My Man therefore, and as fitly too, ſince they would have it ſo had his ſigne Mannall, by which he drewed good Summs of Money out of the Cuſtomes and Excife; nay out of the Exchequer it ſelfe, till *Oliver* was forced to uſe a private mark to make his Credit Authentique among his own Rascals.

Now appeared that abominable Villany, called *Trapanning*; the blot

162 *The Life and Death*

blot and blemish of all Bawdery ; the leud complices in that Monstrous basenesse, being worse by ten degrees then wittals. It made me commend *Harry Martins* Exposition of the *Rumps* Law against Fornication ; that is, provided that people who used that Trade should be sure to keep the doors Locked, and stop all Crannes and Crevises that no body should be able to espy any thing ; for it was made to catch fools onely, wise men would be sure to beware. This Rougery Raigned a long while before any Remedy could be found ; for it was practised upon none but Men of Fashion, Quiet and Fearfull of their Reputation, which those Villains were confident they would preserve at any rate ; which they hoisted up sometimes to Five or Six hundred Pounds, upon pretence of Stuprating a fellowes Wife, that is a Common Whore, who was never worth a Farthing. This mischief

of Mal Cutpurse. 163

mischief fell frequently heavy upon Grave Citizens; till at last one that had been served so, and had entred into Four Hundred Pound Bonds, anxiously discovered his Case to his Friend, who prudently advised him to appoint the payment of it in London, and when these locusts came, to clap an Action of Two or Three Thousand Pounds upon their back, and lay them in the Counter. This was done with success, and the Gallop of this Evil stopp, which made the Trade a little freer then before: no man daring to trust himself in a Womans Company for fear of these Fellowes.

My Trade I am sure was wholly at an end, and my Money gone, get what I would, the Cavaliers my Friends were so needy; so as I was glad to stay at home and play at tick tack for Drink with one of my Companions, and bemoane my decayed Fortunes.

Having

164 *The Life and Death*

Having run this race, and seeing all things grow every day worse and worse by the desperate evil of the Times; I became weary of them and my self together, so that I wholly relinquished all converse or commerce betaking my self to a sedentary life and to reading; wherein before as I was well versed in *Tale-books* and *Romances*, and the *Histori's* of the *Seven Champions*, and the like *Fopperies*: so now I considered that I had an account of my time to make by spending it in more serious *Writings* and *Contemplations*.

He runs long we use to say that never Turns: it was therefore high time for me of thinking of the way by which I should turn, and that presently offered it self to me; for being grown crazy in my body, and discontented in my mind, I yielded to the next dissembler that approached me: which by my bustling and active spirit I had kept off a good while

of Mal Cutpurse. 165

while from seizing me ; it was a Dropfie, a Disease, whose cause you will easily guess from my passed life: but it had such strange and terrible Symptomes, that I thought I was posselt, and that the Devil was got within my Doublet.

For what all the Ecclesiasticall quirks, with their Canons and injunctions could not do, this boysterous malady soon effected. I was forced to leave off that upper part of my Garment, and do penance again in a Blanket ; a Habit distant from the *Irish Rug*, and the *Scotch Plad*, their National Vests for Women of quality, whom my Scoffing Neighbours said I did very much resemble. As for my Belly, from a withered, dried and wrinkled piece of Skin, it was grown the titest, roundest *Globe* of flesh, that ever any beauctuous young Lady strutted with, to the Ostentation of her Fertility, and the Generosity of her Nature. I must
tell

166 The Life and Death

tell you I could not but proud my self in it; and thought nature had reserved that kindnesse for me at the last, insomuch that I could have almost been impregnated (as *Spanish Jennets* are said to be begotten by the Wind) with my own Fancy and Imagination, my conceit proving the same with conception; and to please and maintain me in this delusion A Woman of my Age then living in London, was brought a bed of a Son, which was very certainly true; and an old Parson in the North, one Mr. *Vivan*, of neer a Hundred years old, was juvenilized again, and his age renewed, as to all his senses he enjoyed before at Fifty. But these were signal Miracles and presages of a Revolution in the State (whose hopeful beginnings I lived to see in the the Confusions and Distractions of the *Rump* revived, which I could have Eaten without Salt, as stinking as it was;) and this of mine, the certain

taine

of Mal Cutpurse. 167

caine fore-runners of my dissolution :
fore there was no blood that was ge-
erative in my belly, but only that
destructive of the grape, which by my
excesses was now turned into water,
so that the Tympanied skin thereof
sounded like a Conduit door.

I cannot further Anatomize my
body, for I dared not to look on my
Leggs with the Swan, (though I had
nothing in my whole any way aimi-
able) they did so represent a Bull or
Bears stake, and my Head so wrapt
up with Cloaths, that I lookt like
Mother Skipron ; so that among all
the Looking-glasses my House was
furnisht with for Ornaments, I had
neer a one big enough to see it alto-
gether and at once. But my self
was indeed the best mirrour to my
self ; for every afflicted part and
Member of me did represent and
point out the wickednesse, every one
of them had been instrumental in,
so that I could not but acknowledge
the

168 *The Life and Death*

the justice of my punishment. My Hands indeed escaped this Vengeance, and I think they were the most innocent; for I never Actually or Instrumentally cut any Mans Purse, though I have often restored it; but oh my *Flodding*, *Match-making* Head in those *Sorceries of Lust* I practised! the Leudness and Bastardies that ensued, and those frequent Trottings and Runnings up and down to facilitate and bring about those Debaucheries! These I cannot but acknowledge were indigested to me so plainly, that I was forced to take notice of them; and I hope with a real penitence and true grief to deplore my Condition and former course of Life, I had so profanely and wickedly led.

As an advantage thereto, this disease lingered with me a long time, which I had solitude enough to improve, all people, but some of my Old and Nearest acquaintance forsaking me.

I will

of Mal Cutpurse. 169

I will not boast of my Conversion, least I encourage other vile people to persist in their sins to the last; but I dare assure the world, I never lived happy minute in it, till I was leaving of it, and so I bid it Adieu this Threescore and Fourteenth year of my Age.

It may be expected I should have made a *Will*, let the Reader therefore understand, that of Fifteen Hundred Pounds which I had of my own in good Gold, which some of my Neighbours can bear witness to have seen, out of my *kind heartedness* to my old Friends, the distressed Cavaliers, to help them in their compositions, and other relieve they had formerly, I had not a 100 *l.* to command, which I thought too small a summe to give to Charitable uses, (as to build an Hospital, &c.) it being no way proportionable to my unjust Gaines, as they were every where esteemed: And I was loath

170 *The Life and Death*

to raise Dust out of my Grave (with the Fly riding upon the Chariot Wheel) by such small Evidences of my Expiating Charity. I very well liked and approved of *Allens* the Players pattern, in building those *Almes Houses*, and endowing of them accordingly, but I could not reach to the imitation. The Money that might have been designed that way, as it came from the Devil, returning to the Devil again, into the *Rumps Exchequer* and Treasury at *Haberdashers and Goldsmiths Hall*.

Yet to preserve something of my Memory, and not leave it to the courtesy of an Executor; I anticipated my Funeral Expences, for it being the fashion of the Times to give Rings, to the undoing of the *Confessioners*, who *Live* altogether by the *Dead* and the *New Born*; I distributed some that I had by me (but of far greater value then your pitiful hollow ware of Six or Seven Shil-

of Mal Cutpurse. 171

Shillings a piece, that a Jugler would scorn to shew Tricks with) among my chief Companions and Friends.

These Rings (like Princes Jewels) were notable ones, and had their particular Names likewise; as the *Bartholomew*, the *Ludgate*, the *Exchange*, &c. deriving their appellation from the places they were taken in; they needed no admonition of a Deaths Head, for they were the wages and Monument of their Thieving Masters, who were Entered at *Tyburn*; and I trust my said Friends will wear them both for my sake and theirs.

In short, for my Breath fails me, I did make no *Will* at all, because I had had it so long before to no better purpose; and that if I had had my desert, I should have had an *Executioner*, instead of an *Executor*; 'Tis very well I part so fairly, but remember me to *Dan*, and tell him, he will not need my *Legacy*; for my
divining

172 *The Life and Death*

divining spirit tells me there's a Glut coming which will make him happy and rich, if he knows how to use it.

I have also already disposed of Thirty Pounds of One Hundred Pounds; I have by me, to my Maids, and have charged them to occupy it the best way they can; that and some of my Arts which they have had time to be expert in, will be beyond the advantage of their Spinning and Reeling, and will be able to keep them in repair, and promote them to *Weavers, Shoemakers, and Taylors.*

The rest of my Estate in Money Moveables and Household Goods, my Kinsman *Frith*, a Master of a Ship, dwelling at *Redrife*, will lay claim to, as next of Kin; whom I advise not to make any adventures therewith, but stay at home and be Drunk, rather than to be Drowned with them.

Let

of Mal Cutpurse. 173

Let me be lay'n in my Grave on my Belly, with my my Breech upwards, as well for a *Lucky* Resurrection at Doomsday, as because I am unworthy to look upwards, and that as I have in my LIFE been preposterous, so I may be in my Death; I expect not, nor will I purchase a Funerall Commendation; but if Mr. H—— be Squemish and will not Preach, let the Sexton mumble Two or Three Dusty Clay words and put me in, and there's an **END.**

F I N I S.

